THE ADVOCATE CHURCH: THE THEORY AND PRAXIS OF MINISTRY IN URBAN-INDUSTRIAL MISSION

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Presented to

the Faculty of the School of Theology

at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Ministry

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by

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This dissertation, written by

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PREFACE

Ministry, as I have seen it practiced in the church and taught in several theological schools, carries with it a 'consumer' understanding, in which the laity pays for, and receives, services from its minister. While pernicious in other respects, this rigid distinction between the functions of the minister and the functions of the laity prevents the church as a whole from seeing its discipleship in terms of service to the wider community, the world. The 'priesthood of all believers' means that all Christians have a ministry in the world, and not just those who are ordained to the ministry in its more conventional sense. It is my conviction that congregations will only begin to see this when ordained clergy stop catering to the consumer needs of the affluent churches.

The poorer churches have already begun to see this; and it may well be, that they represent the wave of the future. The 'norm' of a paid minister, plant (with or without mortgage), program, regular Sunday worship, etc., functions today mainly in the suburbs where most of the church-going wealth is. But increasingly this norm is perceived in inner-city and rural areas as an imposition; and even as a middle class standard of success to which all congregations must conform. When rural and inner-city congregations fail to live up to the 'norm', they are often closed, consolidated into other

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congregations, turned into circuits with several points, and otherwise recreated in the image of the suburban church.

This is not to condemn the efficient use of resources, but to try to present a wider range of alternatives, based primarily on the laity. If lay leadership will be the backbone of many rural and urban churches in their service in the world, then we need to develop methods of lay training corresponding to the new situation. We might use the model of the German lay academies or the urban training centers; but whatever model we use, the integrity of these churches must be recognized. This is not, as I see it, a stopgap measure until the 'norm' can be reestablished in these areas. A new model is needed here--as well as in suburbia--which explicitly takes account of the pluralism in the church today.

Moreover, for many people, any kind of traditional church life is irrelevant--suburban, rural, or inner-city--; and consequently, the "Jesus Thing" will have to be present in new forms which are unburdened by much of the old baggage. Here, again, the suburban church must resist the urge to fit all of these radical Christian groups into its own style.

This insight into pluralism has come to me through association with the Urban Theology Unit and the Sheffield Inner-City Ecumenical Mission during the past year; and should be important to me as I enter the unknowns of ministry in rural Nebraska. Many thanks

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to the director and lecturer: John Vincent and Ed Kessler.

I am also especially indebted to Dr. John Coll, Jr., with whom I have been acquainted for the last fourteen years: first as a high school student in Rev. Pierce Johnson's Youth Academy; then as a college student dealing with the problems of philosophy; as a theology student at the Universitaet Mainz; and finally at the School of Theology in Claremont. I have learned a great deal from our discussions, and retain an overriding interest in Process Philosophy. If this does not show through in this dissertation, it is because I am slow to refine and systematize my thinking, and felt that a chapter on Whitehead would have made it even more disjointed and a magnum opus than it already is.

I am also grateful to both of my advisors, Drs. Ekkehard Muehlenberg and Robert Arnott, who have made a number of helpful suggestions and given freely of their time.

My parents deserve special mention, for they have provided not only the wherewithal for my education; but more important still, have given me certain fundamental values to which I still hold, even though many of the positions taken here they will not agree with. To them, I dedicate this dissertation.

Sheffield; March 26, 1974 David N. McCreary

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CHAPTER I

THE CHURCH AS ADVOCATE AND THE PROBLEM OF POWER

The church is increasingly being drawn into the revolutionary ferment of the times, and being forced to declare sides for or against change. Many are confused by this new orientation of the church (which is really not so new), for they have heard the gospel in other contexts, where personal holiness is opposed to political involvement of any kind.

While the concern with personal purity can lead to escapism, it can also leave the problems of power--that is, the right or wrong management of the world--to the shrewd and worldly-wise. In such a way, the naive and the shrewd can walk hand in hand in the ways of the world. The naive rejection of politics does not free one from complicity in power structures. However, a church with power ambitions of its own has succumbed to one of the temptations of Christ.

Both themes--subjective holiness and political ambition--run through Western Christianity from the time of Augustine, and represent an unresolved tension in theology. More concretely and personally, James Baldwin could write of this dilemma, that

> ...in the realm of morals the role of Christianity has been, at best, ambivalent. Even leaving out of account the remarkable arrogance that assumed that the ways and morals of others were inferior to those of Christians, and that they therefore had every right, and could use any means, to change them, the collision

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> between cultures--and the schizophrenia in the mind of Christendom--had rendered the domain of morals as chartless as the sea once was, and as treacherous as the sea still is.[1]

The ideological element in the individualism of personal holiness peaks of the church as a community of love or salvation, while ignoring or denying the very real ways in which the church is tied into the system of power, and supports and legitimizes it. The 'gospel' is, under such conditions, no longer found to be a 'stumbling block', and the church becomes one more way in which people avoid the facts of life. We can only begin to make ourselves credible when we see the real context of oppressive power relationships in which we participate, renounce our privileges, and become a servant church.

In reflecting on the political involvement of the church, the concept of servant is central, but not neutral. "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick." (Matt. 9:12) We are called to serve where the need is the greatest, without regard for our personal purity. As Baldwin concludes: "If the concept of God has any validity or any use, it can only be to make us larger, freer, and more loving."[2]

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[1]James Baldwin, The Fire Next Time (London: Josephs, 1963), pp. 56-57.

[2]Ibid., p. 57.

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The following dissertation is an attempt to think through my own theology in light of certain secular concerns, notably the problem of structural conflict. There have been many experiences behind its subject, not all of which could profitably be discussed within the limits of a D. Min. dissertation. Accordingly, I have omitted much of relevance and interest.

The first influence shaping my concern was the course at the Institut Oecumenique (Bossey, Switzerland, 1969/70). There I learned through personal confrontation the distance separating the affluent industrial societies from the dependent non-industrial socieities. I also began to see our arrogance, in the church especially, is resented in the Third World. This is not just a subjective response of inferiority feelings, collectively experienced, but an historical relationship which is objectively exploitive.

The second influence to bear on my idea of an 'advocate church' is the time I spent at the Evangelischer Sozialamt, and later, with the Gossner Mission in Mainz, W. Germany. Since this experience is discussed below, it need only be pointed out that it gave me my initiation into the plausibility of socialist thought. Moreover, it challenged me to rethink fundamentally much of the theological individualism I had learned; as well as to question (what now appears as) conservative social engineering in various forms of social work.

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The third influence was my involvement in some community action projects. These are some of the stories upon which I base my case. Some other stories could be substituted, such as my experiences as a factory worker in Germany. But these are illustrative of the kinds of communities in which the churches are mostly located, and for that reason alone, more valuable. The lesson I have learned is that wherever one tries to exercise a total ministry, one will eventually run into the power people, who, as a class, dominate society. The real lesson, then, is that if one seriously goes about the business of servanthood, then one will have to pay a price for it. As the Franciscans say, we must become 'one of the minor brothers'.

The discipline of poverty is fundamental for the servant role. It is not just poverty in its ubiquitous form of economic deprivation, but a willing renunciation of special privilege, including upward striving.

In light of the conflicts of our time, one can see the meaning of the ecumenical and Christian-Marxist dialogues. They are not ends in themselves, but proceed from common concerns which are real to the world. Consequently, each has developed from relatively inner-directed, sometimes academic, issues over faith and order, worldviews, and so forth, to questions of liberating action. The connotations of the word 'praxis' convey a richness of meaning in many of these discussions, which no English word can translate. It is both

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theory and action in tension, mutual criticism, and a dynamic total understanding of the movement of history. Such a consciousness challenges the naive appropriation of static categories in Christian social action, such as urban-industrial mission, justice, underdevelopment, etc.

The 1966 conference sponsored by the Department on Church and Society of the World Council of Churches took note of this situation in selecting its theme "Christians in the Technical and Social Revolutions of our Time." The conference was a landmark in ecumenical thinking, for it was truly international in its perspectives. Previous gatherings, such as the Stockholm Conference of 1925 and the Oxford Conference of 1937, were limited primarily to spokesmen for North America and Europe. The so-called Third World was only vicariously represented by missionaries. All were Protestant conferences as well, for the Orthodox Churches joined the WCC in the early 1960's, and the Catholic Church has only recently opened up to ecumenical contact at the official level.

The Church and Society Conference of 1966 stands in stark contrast to its earlier predecessors, for the social and political context is drastically different within which it took place. Whereas the earlier conferences were concerned with the turmoil in Europe caused by the depression, the Russian revolution, and fascism, the 1966 conference was dealing with self-determination, development, liberation

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from oppressive world economic structures, and a theology of revolution.

Perhaps this conference reflects the crisis of identity, which the official ecumenical movement is undergoing today in the 'post-Visser t'Hooft era'. The older ecumenical theology of a 'responsible society' no longer seems as serviceable as it once was. In spite of rhetoric about responsibility, justice, peace, economic 'take off', and so on, the experience of the first development decade has been, on the whole, disheartening. In spite of rising expectations, in part supported by liberal promises, the poor continue to get poorer, and the rich get richer. The fact of capital accumulation in the rich countries is hard to reconcile with the benign self-concept of an 'affluent society'; especially when the dependency of the non-industrial countries is due to oppression, rather than 'backwardness'. The discrepancy between the ideology of advanced industrial society and the real, historical context--prevailing and increasing world impoverishment in terms of wealth, freedom, rights, and a humane future--is the contradictory situation with which the church of our time has to do, both as a political participant and as a putative reconciler.

The four preparatory volumes for the 1966 conference set the stage not only for the Church and Society meeting and the General Conference of the WCC at Uppsala, but have been important for the whole redirection of the ecumenical movement toward the problem of

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oppression and liberation in the developing conflict between the First World (Western countries and Japan) and the Second World (Soviet Camp and Yugoslavia) on the one side, and the countries loosely defined as the Third World.[3]

THE CHANGE FROM EAST-WEST CONFLICT TO NORTH-SOUTH CONFLICT

It may rightly be asked what a global analysis of conflict has to do with suburbia, upon which this paper will focus in the next chapter. To see the answer to this question, one must realize that the 'global village' or 'spaceship earth' is an interrelated causal totality, which is divided by class antagonisms. On the world scale, underdevelopment and development must be seen as discreet processes, rather than stages on the road from 'backwardness' to industrial society. Countries are underdeveloped systematically, both by elites within and the industrial countries without. Because suburbia benefits from the exploitative system, it too is part of the problem. To see how this conflict is developing on a world scale, we

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[3]John C. Bennett (ed.), Christian Social Ethics in a Changing World (New York: Association Press, 1966); Z. K. Matthews, Responsible Government in a Revolutionary Age (New York: Association Press, 1966); Denys Munby, Economic Growth in World Perspectives (New York: Association Press, 1966); Egbert De Vries, Man in Community (New York: Association Press, 1966).

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must first say something about recent history.

Since 1956 the politics of the Cold War have been changing. The 20th Party Congress of the Soviet Union spoke of de-Stalinization and co-existence with the West, thus initiating a thaw in the relations between East and West. Though America still spoke of 'brinkmanship' and 'roll-back', France was the maverick exception in the Western camp. DeGaulle saw the long term implications of the 20th Party Congress for the gradual detente between the Soviet and American camps; and he also saw that the balance of power rested with the 'Third World' (which he evidently labeled after the French 'third estate'). His policies aimed at making France the powerbroker between the First and Second Worlds by rallying these uncommited nations to herself.

The myth of monolithic world Communism received another blow when it became apparent, that the rift between China and Russia was more or less permanent. Up to that time, Russia had been regarded as the central authority in the Communist movement, especially in the ideological sphere. The Marxist 'fundamentalism' of China provided an alternative ideology for many of the Third World countries, which was based on the revolutionary potential of the peasants, rather than the industrial proletariat. Marx himself had come to revise his theory of historical stages of development, which was put forth in a rigidly deterministic scheme in the Communist

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Manifesto, because of his insight into oriental despotism. It did not fit the European model of development: feudal aristocracy; mercantile and industrial capitalism; succeeded in the final stage by proletarian socialism. Marx believed that a direct leap from oriental despotism to socialism was possible.[4] Because China has made this leap already, it offers an alternative center of power to the two superpowers, which may well be the basis for a loose Third World alliance.

In this new context of international relations, the detente between Russia and America may in part be seen as an attempt to forestall revolution and an alliance of the oppressed. The focus of international conflict has shifted, therefore, from East/West to (loosely stated) North/South. The counterrevolutionary posture of America in the Third World, which is justified in the vocabulary of the Cold War, is really the suppression of national self-determination and the will of these peoples to control their own economies.

This can be substantiated by examining the statistics on arms expenditures in the so-called 'affluent societies'. These military outlays are necessary, because 20% of the world's population controls 80% of the world's resources. To get some idea of the size of expenditures on weapons, let us see some of the statistics gleaned

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[4]Cf. Michael Harrington, Socialism (New York: Bantam, 1973), p. 170.

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mainly from 'establishment' sources.

Adam Yarmolinsky in his book, The Military Establishment, says that "... It is estimated that 90% of ordnance production is consumed by defense, 80% of aircraft, 60% of shipbuilding, and 35% of electrical equipment."[5]

In 1970, the U.S. spent 8.1% of its GNP on defense, which is close to 3/4 of public expenditures. Though this is somewhat inflated because of the war, it still runs around 2/3 of public expenditures.

Worldwide military expenditures are perhaps even more revealing. In 1964, the world total spent on arms was $139 billion. By 1971, it had increased to $216 billion. The percentage spent by the U.S. in 1964 was 36.7, which increased throughout the war years to a peak of 42.4 in 1969, and leveled off at 36.1 by 1971 (though this means an absolute increase in expenditures). Thus, in 1964, the worldwide per capita expenditure for arms was $43, and in 1971, $58.[6]

Even more interesting are the relative amounts spent on arms by developed and developing countries. Developed countries spent $125 billion for arms in 1964, and have increased this outlay to $185 billion in 1971. Developing countries paid $14 billion in 1964 and

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[5]Adam Yarmolinsky, The Military Establishment (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 248.

[6]U.S. Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstracts of the U.S. 1972 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1972), No. 401.

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$31 billion in 1971. The per capita expenditure in 1964 was $134 in developed countries, and $6 in developing. By 1971, each person paid $186 in developed countries, and in developing, $11.

Another indicator of the militarization of foreign policy are statistics on foreign economic and military aid programs. In 1971, the U.S. spent $3,478 millions total on economic and military aid. Economic aid accounted for a total of $1,618 millions, of which $874 millions were grants and $743 millions were loans.[7] The remainder--about half of all foreign aid--goes for armaments to the Third World, through whose conflicts the superpowers often fight vicarious wars.

The military establishment is also an industry of waste, engaged in producing guns not butter. 60% of military expenditures go for plant, equipment and supplies in the U.S., and 60% of that goes for material with no significant commercial market. Nevertheless, one worker in ten is in some way related to the military-industrial complex. In some sections of the country, cutbacks in defense spending can prove disastrous to the local economy, such as Seattle, where Boeing is the main industry. The easy way in which many companies get insured profits through defense contracts discourages diversification of the economy. In Los Angeles, 56% of plant capacity depends on defense, and 82% in San Diego.

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[7] Ibid., No. 1278.

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Though America is somewhat extreme in its fortress mentality, this reaction is not atypical. The fear that the industrial nations show toward the Have-Nots beyond their borders is also directed toward the Third World people in their midst. The threat that the middle classes in America feel from non-white Americans has given rise to a suburb very much like the medieval walled town. Many developers in Southern California make blatant appeals in their advertising to middle class fears, promising security from the general upheaval in housing tracts with fences, guarded gates, private police, dogs, electronic surveillance, and similar measures. Moreover, large sections of poor areas in Los Angeles are now patrolled by helicopters equipped with searchlights and infrared television cameras.

Though America provides a military umbrella for the other countries in the Western bloc, similar dependency on arms production also prevails in these countries. Britain and Sweden are two of the largest arms salesmen in the Third World. The Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development shows in its Statistics of Foreign Trade, that in 1970 the United Kingdom exported "162,642,000 worth of firearms of war and ammunition to the rest of the world. Nations such as Sweden and Switzerland, which carefully foster a pacifist image, exported $38,067,000 and $45,485,000 worth respectively. Of that, Sweden exported $13,663,000 worth to

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developing countries, and Switzerland sent $24,046,000.[8] Political neutrality does not exist as long as a country is not economically neutral.

The point is not to discuss the morality of nations, but to recognize the function of arms sales, both as an economic prop and as a foreign policy measure. While international conflict may seem far removed from the quiet streets of suburbia, it is only within this context of domination that the privatistic life of the middle classes is possible, for the privileges of this class are at the expense of other's sufferings. Because this is a conflict situation, part of the task in the chapter on community action will be to see how the middle class deals with it.

SOME BASIC ISSUES IN THE PROBLEM OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT

Samuel Parmar, an economist from India, described the problem of development as both an economic problem and as a problem of social justice; as both an internal and external problem. In order to accumulate foreign exchange, a country must save money it earns over and above what it needs to reproduce the labor force. Only by a primitive accumulation of capital can it get investment

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[8] Statistics of Foreign Trade (January-December 1971), Table 95 (pp. 149-150).

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exchange necessary to buy the expensive technological hardware (machines, etc.) and software (research and development, services, patents, etc.).

However, people can only be motivated to make sacrifices for the future, if they have a stake in it. Regimes which benefit only an elite cannot motivate people to sacrifice, nor will people save if their savings are expropriated by external exploitation. The ethical problem of creating a just social order (and ultimately, a just world order) is the dimension of development with which theologicans of liberation are dealing. Thus, they reject an 'economism' or 'technologism' as an adequate understanding of development. Development is not just modernization in a quantitative sense (GNP, etc.), for qualitative standards are also relevant factors.

It is to the credit of Gunnar Myrdal, that he points out the importance of non-economic factors in development issues, especially the methodological issue of stating one's own value premises explicitly. Though he may be faulted at one point in his own method--ignoring the historic structural relations of exploitation between developed and underdeveloped countries--he nevertheless puts things in their proper context when he writes:

> The very act of clarifying what should be meant by "economic" problems or "economic" factors must, in fact, imply an analysis that includes all the "non-economic" determinants. From a scientific point of view, the only permissible demarcation--the

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only one that is tenable logically--is between relevant and less relevant factors.[9]

It is important to recognize, that development and underdevelopment are discreet processes, not a unilinear movement from one state to the other. Underdevelopment is not static backwardness, but a dynamic process in its own right. Because Western social scientists have applied models of development to Third World countries which do not obtain under their conditions, the failure is taken as the cause of underdevelopment, rather than questioning the model and its assumptions. The criticisms of Third World social scientists (and a number of First World ones, too) toward a rigid and abstract model of development (e.g., Rostow's stages of development) challenge the universal claims of the Western experience in modernization. To the contrary, models of development can only follow the study of the concrete social history of the 'underdeveloped' countries, including their exploitation under mercantile and industrial capitalism.

With the ecology crisis it is becoming apparent that the Western model of industrialization, if applied to the rest of the world, would spell disaster. Of course, the industrial countries do not plan to do anything, which would endanger their own position of power; and this poses the problem of development models. The Western

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[9]Gunnar Myrdal, The Challenge of World Poverty (New York: Vintage, 1970), p. 13.

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consumption of non-renewable resources will come to an end at some point, and so will our growth economies. Yet growth is still seen as the highest good of development in most development literature, which shows the extent to which we are locked into this form of industrial economy. As the Marxist sociologist, Henri Lefebvre writes:

> Control over external nature is increasing, while man's appropriation of his own nature is stagnating or regressing. The former falls primarily under the head of growth, the latter is development.[10]

No economic 'law' is immutable, for they are rules of domination over man and nature, which have arisen historically. Broad cultural trends are not faits accomplis, even though they may appear as hopelessly permanent in the short-run. In the long-run, the expectations with which one approaches social action determine to a large extent what actually does get changed. In this regard, the German sociologist, Claus Offe, makes the following observations about Sachzwänge (roughly, 'objective forces'):

> The boundary within which in a given situation the possible room for decision is limited by objective conditions (Sachgesetzlichkeiten), can never be theoretically evaluated, but can only be constantly pushed back practically by politically organized efforts; this boundary constitutes a barrier, which in principle is dissolvable, but which is not at the present time dissolved.[11]

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[10]Henri Lefebvre, The Sociology of Marx (New York: Vintage, 1969), p. 197.

[11]Claus Offe, "Sachzwang und Entscheidungsspielraum," Stadtbauwelt, Heft 38/39 (1969), (translation mine).

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Though we may agree with Myrdal that we have no ready-made models for development, we do know of a critical, democratic strand within the socialist tradition, which provided the main opposition to the authoritarian capitalist structures of the modern period; and which is becoming increasingly important in the Third World, both as a method of research and as a theory of revolution. For Americans, especially, to deny its importance is blindness, and a universalization of our own limitations. In this respect, we have much overdue homework to finish. To establish a critical method of social research will be the topic of the next section.

ADVOCACY IN THEORY AND ACTION

It was Simone Weil, who coined the oft quoted phrase, "giving a voice to the voiceless," which is a good way to describe advocacy or partisanship on the side of the oppressed. The church in Latin America, in black America or South Africa, is increasingly accepting the role of advocate as a legitimate thrust of the gospel. Thus, a large part of their thinking is devoted to a search for method, which corresponds to their partisan role. The search for method is at the same time theological, ethical, and sociological; for on the one hand, it attempts to consider critically traditional theories of revolution from an explicitly Judaeo-Christian perspective; but on the other hand, to criticize traditional Christian social action and social beliefs

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from the standpoint of critical social theory.

Because they take a dynamic and critical view of society, the partisan theologians reject the static categories of positivist social research, which focuses attention upon the empirical facts of a given system, but do not examine the historical development of the system as a whole. The model of natural science does not apply to social science, for no social scientist can, in fact, stand outside of the various social interests and processes of history which he/she is studying. The very claim to be objective already distorts the object under investigation, for the social scientists have a stake in certain social outcomes (which is usually not true of natural scientists). Thus, the positivist method tends to convert history into nature, which is false consciousness. In this regard, Horkheimer and Adorno have observed, that...

> From the very beginning of the new science the joy in progress was muted: its thought on society took pride in not transcending that which was. The impulse of philosophy, to transform the Ought into the Is readily gave way to the sober acceptance of the Is as the Ought.... Whenever the voice of this science is raised in the greatest pathos, one can be sure that it is proscribing something for itself, and precisely that essential for the sake of which men reflect about society. Equivocation often has very sound reasons: sociology has remained "positive" not only because it desires to keep to the given and wants to extirpate the wish as the father of thought, but also because it takes a positive stance toward that which exists. It has enjoined itself to refrain from treating that which exists critically.[12]

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[22]Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, Aspects of

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To see social structures as irreducible fact is to omit the historical context of the system--the power relationships, the social classes, the history of production--which have brought it about. But, as Bottomore writes, the usual methods of social research ignore these relevant factors:

> The matter can be briefly (and inadequately) summarized as follows: in the natural sciences it is possible to conceive an ultimate closed theoretical system, while in the social sciences this is inconceivable because in human affairs genuine novelty can result from conscious volition. A similar point has been made by H. Marcuse in his study of the development of social theory. He condemns sociology, especially Comte's sociology, on account of its search for invariant laws and its conception of a unified science, because this eliminates man's freedom and rationality.[13]

The criticism of positivist method should not be taken as an attempt to impugn the 'facts', nor to elaborate theoretical systems apart from empirical research. It is necessary, however, to put the facts in their proper historical context, in order to see their real meaning. This should be understood as critical consciousness, rather than 'science' in any narrow sense. This critical consciousness, as a friend observes, overcomes the power of false images:

> Individualism, lack of recognition of otherness, quantitative evaluation, are not only moral weaknesses, but rather an epistemological infirmity: people are blind to context and history

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Sociology (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), p. 7.

[13]T. B. Bottomore, Sociology (New York: Vintage, 1972), pp. 33-34.

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(history is the "other" time, not now). The non-contextual and non-historical consciousness recognizes "facts". Ideologically, a fact is what you can understand immediately, without interpretation, like you consume a hot-dog. The fact par excellence may be what happens in Las Vegas. You put money into a machine, and so you create the non-contextual fact: getting or not getting money. It is a matter of chance, hazard, risk, game.... Back in New York City, I was struck by the similarity of atmosphere between Las Vegas and the Stock Exchange: same figures, same noise, same fever, strange signs, same mystery about what makes things happen, ideology of luck, winner-loser, everybody has a chance. Same religiosity mixed with complex machinery. The implicit religion of the game is to make you believe that you can be at the dawn of a totally new day where everything that happened yesterday has no effect.

As a matter of fact the process is a little more subtle; it is not exactly a non-contextual approach. The process everywhere in the States (and in theWestern world in general) is a switch from the real context (the historical one) to a totally ideological mythological one. That is that instead of recognition of otherness (here the distance of history) you have alienation (which [is] the perversion of the relationship). The pattern is the process of advertising. The real context of Coca-Cola is the history of its production; raw material, relationship with the third world, the factories, the power on the market, money and so on; the ideological context is a pseudo-philosophical one: "the real thing", the image of youth, adventure, movement....

Therefore, what is politically at stake in the U. S. is the way you present (ideological level) each problem in a credible context of values and necessities. Here again, you find thousands of ideological possibilities, but no historical alternatives....

Therefore, the power will belong to the group which imposes its "image"....

Image is flat and my fear now is that the consciousness of American people is flat too, like a TV screen or a poster, like commercials, no beyond, no depth, it is the consciousness of "one-dimensional" men or women (see Marcuse). Image does not ask the question of origins or future. Image organizes things taken for granted in the (non-historical) mythological context of American values: "world leadership", "to be number one", "work

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> ethics", "everybody has a chance", "individual consciousness"... [emendations made where needed]. [14]

Similar reservations about the positivist model of social research have been made by Juergen Habermas, who points out that questions of group identity and self-understanding necessarily evade the methods of instrumentalism.

> Within a sociology as strict behavior science questions relating to the self-understanding of social groups cannot be formulated; these are not thereby meaningless, nor do they evade rational (verbindlich) discussion. They result objectively from the fact that the reproduction of social life poses not only technically soluble questions, but includes more than processes of adjustment according to the model of efficient application of means (zweckrationaler Mittelverwendung). The sociated (vergesellschafteten) individuals receive their life only through group identity, which, in contrast to animal groups, must be constantly built up, destroyed, and rebuilt.... [15]

While Habermas does not reject empirical-analytic methods, he does suggest that they have to be integrated with the historical-hermeneutical method in a critical social theory. Lucien Goldmann takes a similar stand toward the historical perspective in his rejection of the ahistorical positivist method:

> One of the fundamental principles of the sociological method which I myself follow is to be rigorously single-minded--like Marxist thought in general. It asserts, among other things, that no sociology can be realistic unless it is historical, just as no historical research can be scientific and realistic unless it is

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[14] A personal letter from Yann Redalié, January 20, 1972.

[15] Juergen Habermas, Zur Logik der Sozialwissenschaften (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970), p. 67 (translation mine).

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> sociological. Not only are there no distinctively social facts, and other human facts which are historical: there are not even two analytically distinct dimensions of these facts which could be attached to two different sciences. Thus the need to study human facts both in their essential structure and in their concrete reality requires a method which is simultaneously both sociological and historical.[16]

Habermas and Goldmann share the view that the facts of social life can only be understood within the historical traditions of social groups as authentic or alienated life expressions. It is only within such a framework, that one can formulate the 'negative' facts of social life, such as alienated labor and accompanying manifestations in the society in general. In the positivist frame of reference, the conflicts in the society are seen as problems to be overcome through social engineering. Individual fulfilment ("the pursuit of happiness") is understood only within the limits of the market system, which seeks to integrate all needs to a transaction for goods and services. It is, in any case, a static and ahistorical vision, which offers no alternative to the existing social system.

The historically-oriented sociologies, on the other hand, see in the mutability of social structure and the unresolved contradictions in the present order the pressure toward a radical change. This concept of historical change is neither rigidly deterministic, nor a simple

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[16]Lucien Goldmann, "'Genetic Structuralism' in the Sociology of Literature," in Sociology of Literature and Drama (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), p. 109.

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ideal, unrelated to historical conditions. It is a tendency, which must be helped along.

In the conflict-oriented sociologies, the 'levers' of social change were sought out, by which the structure of society could be changed. Since one of the main devices for pushing the system to its outere limits is polarization, study of it was central in early sociological study. Lewis Coser writes of the first generation of sociologists, that they...

> ...addressed themselves to a public which was engaged in, advocated, and highly valued different types of conflict activities. This reference group gave to the representative sociological thinkers of the time positive response and recognition, thus reinforcing and sustaining their self-image. And since this public placed high positive valuation on conflict activities, the sociologists of that generation not only focused their attention upon conflict phenomena, but also tended to evaluate them positively. Conflict was seen as inherent in the social structure, and those particular types of conflict which were evaluated negatively could be eliminated, they felt, only through structural change. Thus even a negative evaluation of certain types of conflict pointed to the need for structural reform.[17]

The newer generation of social scientists is not primarily concerned with structural reform, but with stabilizing existing structures through conflict management. Their clients are no longer the activists, but the decision-makers in various bureaucracies. Coser's description of this newer, academic sociologist could equally well

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[17]Lewis Coser, The Functions of Social Conflict (New York: Free Press, 1969), p. 19.

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describe the social function of many pastoral counselors:

> They center attention predominantly upon problems of adjustment rather than upon conflict; upon social statics rather than upon dynamics. Of key problematic importance to them has been the maintenance of existing structures and the ways and means of insuring their smooth functioning. They have focused upon maladjustments and tensions which interfere with consensus. Where the older generation discussed the need for structural change, the new generation deals with adjustment of individuals to given structures. In the dominant trend of contemporary American sociology, the psychological subsumes the structural and hence individual malfunctioning subsumes social conflict. [18]

The advocate church does not abhor conflict, nor does it try to harmonize irreconcilable interests with easy talk of reconciliation. Moreover, it must be stated emphatically, that conflict is basically social and objective--conflicts of group interests--and not subjective and personal. The 'personal problem' in psychology is very much like the 'bare fact' in sociology: both are non-contextual.

The contextual approach to conflict does not accept conflict reduction as an end in itself; for the context of conflict is the total situation of a person in society, not just specific dissatisfactions within the various systems. The main determinate of the situation is the inequality that prevails between social classes, not only in the distribution of wealth, but legal rights, education, culture, etc. The primary source of conflict is the prevailing inequality in the social pyramid, both nationally and internationally, which in discussions

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[18] Ibid., p. 20.

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about conflict management is rarely mentioned. Consequently, the methods of conflict reduction are used to stabilize this unequal situation by providing ventilation for minor conflicts and irritations before they build up into something explosive. "Anything that can be done to make good conditions better or to reduce the number of temporary dissatisfactions and disappointments represents a gain."[19] It is interesting to note, that though their metaphysics are radically opposed, behavioral psychology and non-directive counseling serve the same end in industry: the rationalization of existing social relationships. Because they usually have only a formal humanism, these methods become subtle techniques for social engineering within the values of conservative interests; and in no way present a threat to the dehumanizing inequality, which is structured into the system as a whole.

From the partisan perspective, the only alternative to an abstract humanism, which takes for granted the existing system, is a humanism with explicit social goals and an alternative conception of society. Only within the framework of an alternative can one judge whether these various techniques serve or hinder the end of an equalitarian society. This is one of the major issues in the discussion

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[19]Excerpts from N.R.F. Maier, Psychology in Industry (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), Chap. 20.

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of the community action projects in the next chapter: the extent to which community development methods are just conservative social therapy; or whether they offer potential for creating a critical consciousness among the middle classes.

In this regard, the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, has developed a literacy training method, which is based on the proposition, that truly humanizing education aids the individual in naming and creating his or her own world, and thereby is transformed from an object of manipulation to a subject in the realm of freedom. This is necessarily a politically partisan activity, for any education of the oppressed necessarily destroys the false consciousness created by the oppressor. It implies, as well, the transcendence of a system in which the oppressors themselves become dehumanized objects. Freire writes:

> This then is the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well. The oppressors, who oppress, exploit, and rape by virtue of their power, cannot find in this power the strength to liberate either the oppressed or themselves. Only power that springs from the weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong to free both. Any attempt to "soften" the power of the oppressor in deference to the weakness of the oppressed almost always manifests itself in the form of false generosity; indeed, the attempt never goes beyond this....
>
> True generosity consists precisely in fighting to destroy the causes which nourish false charity. False generosity constrains the fearful and subdued, the "rejects of life", to extend their trembling hands. True generosity lies in striving so that these hands--whether of individuals or entire peoples--need be extended

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> less and less in supplication, so that more and more they become human hands which work and, working, transform the world.[20]

Freire also rejects theories of revolutionary leadership, which place the responsibility for change at the initiative of a few revolutionaries, and at the same time, display profound distrust of the people. Freire thus rejects the elitism of Leninism, and sides with Rosa Luxemburg in a basic trust of the masses as the agent of liberation. Freire emphasizes, that...

> Political action on the side of the oppressed must be pedagogical action in the authentic sense of the word, and therefore, action with the oppressed. Those who work for liberation must not take advantage of the emotional dependence of the oppressed--dependence that is the fruit of the concrete situation of domination which surrounds them and which engendered their unauthentic view of the world. Using their dependence to create still greater dependence is an oppressor tactic....
>
> The correct method for a revolutionary leadership to employ in the task of liberation is, therefore, not "libertarian propaganda". Nor can the leadership merely "implant" in the oppressed a belief in freedom, thus thinking to win their trust. The correct method lies in dialogue. The conviction of the oppressed that they must fight for their liberation is not a gift bestowed by the revolutionary leadership, but the result of their own conscientizacao.[21]

One is reminded of Mao's statement here, that "I don't teach the people, the people teach me.' This is one of the hardest things for any of us to learn: the art of listening, learning, and

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[20]Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), pp. 28-29.

[21]Ibid., pp. 53-54.

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understanding the authentic word of the people.

Saul Alinsky expresses a similar faith in people, which is probably one of the reasons his methods of 'social work' have been declared 'unprofessional'. The other reason is, that they are conflict-oriented, and use polarization as the major strategy. Referring to the activity of the organizer, Alinsky writes, that...

> In the end he has one conviction--a belief that if people have the power to act, in the long run they will, most of the time, reach the right decisions. The alternative to this would be rule by the elite--either a dictator or some form of a political aristocracy. ...Believing in people, the radical has the job of organizing them so that they will have the power and opportunity to best meet each unforeseeable future crisis as they move ahead in their eternal search for those values of equality, justice, freedom, peace, a deep concern for the preciousness of human life, and all those rights and values propounded by Judaeo-Christianity and the democratic political tradition. Democracy is not an end but the best means toward achieving these values. This is my credo for which I live and, if need be, die.[22]

Alinsky shares with Freire the same criticism of organizers, who attempt to supplant the group's leadership with their own. In a later section, the distinction between the 'influence leader' and the 'natural leader' will be developed, and how problems arise when the distinction between the two roles are confused. In this regard, Alinsky is quite clear about priorities:

> If you respect the dignity of the individual you are working with, then his desires, not yours; his values, not yours; his ways of

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[22]Saul Alinsky, Rules for Radicals (New York: Vintage, 1972), pp. 11-12.

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> working and fighting, not yours; his choice of leadership, not yours; his programs, not yours, are important and must be followed; except if his programs violate the high values of a free and open society.[23]

Alinsky's method presupposes certain humanistic values, which make it unsuitable for, say, organizing a white citizens' council to keep minorities out of a community. It presupposes liberation from oppression, and not, as some have maintained, perpetration of it. (Even though such projects as 'Back of the Yards' have become exclusionist after getting power; that was not necessarily due to his method as such, and shows the limitations of 'technique' alone). Alinsky made it a point to organize with people, who invited him into their community and accepted his democratic values.

Of course, Alinsky was only involved with middle class people at the very end of his career, having spent most of his organizing life with working class people and minority groups. It is questionable, whether organizing the middle classes can ever achieve a change in consciousness, for these people are usually more able to articulate their needs and desires than the lower classes. Consequently, the middle classes think primarily of improvements in their privileged position within existing structures, rather than either solidarity with classes below them or a change in the system. It is

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[23] Ibid., p. 122.

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for this reason that we must be very critical about organizing among the middle class.

To some extent, there is a certain romantic air about persons who attempt to organize lower class, oppressed people. Many middle class students and intellectuals, out of Christian or abstract political motives, move into poor neighborhoods or take up work in factories, in order to realize certain ideals. They soon realize that these people are not where they are in terms of consciousness, nor do the would-be organizers know their situation. They are looked upon with distrust, since in our society it is generally understood, that one should capitalize one's individual assets, such as education. Neither the middle class nor the lower class understand someone who rejects the individualism of the society for the sake of a collective enterprize. Thus, the organizer finds that he or she is not only regarded as eccentric by the lower class, but can even be seen as a traitor by the middle class milieu from which he or she came. It is a limbo situation, in which many find themselves frustrated by the fact that they have no real power base in the community.

There is no ready-made answer to this problem, as Mike Jempson has said, but...

> My own, contentious, ground-rule has been vulnerability: being accessible to people and ideas, being aware of my innocence and being prepared to respond to pressure from the community. This does not preclude the interplay of my own ideas and attitudes with those of the community, nor an ideology, nor some basic

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> analysis. It does mean that the prescriptive element in my approach is combated by a comprehensive recognition of the community's understanding of itself, and that strategy can eventually have a realistic base.[24]

The revision of our own agendas and conceptions through action in a community is a dynamic process of theory and practice, or, in a more American approach: exposure-reflection-action. It is not an ivory tower approach to theory, which many of us need to unlearn before we can take the people seriously with whom we hope to work. Action may invalidate a theory, just as certain actions can be ruled out on the basis of theory.

While community development is a valuable tool, it is precisely its 'neutrality' that makes it, like many of the techniques of counseling and organizational development, so questionable. It does not fundamentally question the role of the target group in the larger society, for it generally accepts the structure of society as it is received and maneuvers within that framework. Thus, it is shrewdly or naively used to stabilize a situation of inequality under progressive banners of 'citizen participation' and 'advocacy planning', etc.

The alternative to this formal humanism is to raise questions of concrete values; for the Christian, the theological questions. The

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[24]Mike Jempson, "Who's Revolution: Motivation and the Middle-Class Slummer", Movement, No. 11, p. 8.

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use of technique, within the Christian community, is subservient to the healing ministry, discipleship, parables in action, driving out demons, feeding the hungry, etc. Within the perspective of liberation, Christians must critically examine these techniques as to who is using them and to what ultimate end. If charity of any kind increases dependency, then a vital aspect of Christian anthropology is practically denied--freedom and responsibility. This cannot be counted unequivocally as a 'good work', nor be of indifference to us. If technique is ultimately used to define problems as personal or individual, when in fact they are social in nature and effect, then that too is important to us.

If it is true, as Freire says, that liberation is solely the task of the oppressed, then it is a question for privileged middle class people whether they can play a part in it at all. Without prejudging the answer factually, Christians can reply prescriptively with Bonhoeffer, that... "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die."[25] In other words, we must pay a price; we must, as privileged people, be willing to accept the loss of our privileges for the benefit of those without them. Because Christians have symbolic goals which transcend self-interest, we must take leadership in this task.

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[25]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship (New York: Macmillan, 1963), p. 99.

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THE CHURCH AS AN ADVOCATE

The problem actually centers on the meaning of conversion, and its significance in countries where one becomes 'Christian' *through acculturation, rather than through intentional decision.* The Biblical meaning of conversion connotes a complete turning around from what one has been before, and is thus closely connected with one's individual attitudes and behavior. Unfortunately, conversion has often been interpreted on a strictly individualistic level of concern for personal purity, especially in American revivalism, where the concern for the right management of the world was played down or ignored. Discipleship does not deny the social character of human existence, and the gospel uses social and political categories to describe the vocation of Christ and the disciples (Matt. 25:31-46; Luke 4:18-19, for instance). Nevertheless, the personal religious experience of the believer became more important for the pietist and revivalist traditions than the total quality of the Christian's life (with notable exceptions, like the peace churches, etc.).

> Excursus. This individualistic tradition is continued in the human potentials movement in the liberal Protestant denominations, such as the pastoral counseling skills which deal primarily with individuals in a one-to-one relation. This is not to deny the importance of the personal in Christianity when criticizing the counseling movement, but to fault the conceptual model which underlies much of its practice. Most counseling models begin with the view, that the 'problem' is inside the subject, rather than the

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situation. Consequently, this form of 'blaming the Victim' (William Ryan) results in recommendations to change the subject, while most of the time maintaining the same role commitments in society. That the roles themselves might be the source of the internal contradictions is usually outside the optics of the counselor, who seeks to stabilize the situation of the client in various states of depression and melancholy. Indeed, such individualistic techniques as employed in counseling often direct attention away from systematic exploitation (and hence, psychological alienation) in that they make a person believe that his or her problems are strictly personal problems, which have to be handled individually, rather than through group solidarity and political participation.

Of course, one cannot generalize this criticism to cover all cases which the counselor encounters. Grief, for instance, deals more with an existential issue than a social one. It is, though, problematic, that counselors rarely make this distinction in any critical analysis, and present the ultimate solution to all complaints as the 'growth group'. That the growth group model is now recommended for 'healthy' people (i.e., people who don't need them) is a similar witness to its apolitical stand: it wastes scarce resources in a 'sick' world. The partisan view of the church holds that Christians should be present for the sick and not the well (Matt. 9:12).

Like other social techniques, the growth group is neutral, and depends upon the context of values in which it is employed. Unlike the apolitical growth group model, small groups which deal with personal pain within an understanding of social oppression (e.g., women's awareness groups) see an intimate connection between emotional growth and a new political awareness of one's real social situation. Such is the aim of Paulo Freire's groups.

Recent attempts in the pastoral counseling movement to introduce more of the social-political element into its model of small groups still tend to emphasize a dichotomy between individual change and social change, with the priority of the group placed on the former rather than on the latter. Personal growth is still seen as a process independent of the outward thrust of the group, its political and social goals. It fails to see that much of the restlessness ("living unlived lives"--Erich Fromm) is due to the lack of any significant control and self-determination in one's social environment. Groups with social-political goals see growth as concomitant with the process of social involvement.

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> The effective group leader is not only an organizer, but sensitive to the social factors that keep a member in a state of personal self-concern and unable to function in a cooperative effort.
>
> It is precisely at the point where counseling begins to become overtly political, that it is proscribed or curbed. A friend has tried to use conjoint family therapy to deal with the 'politics of the family' (Laing), but to no avail. The parents only want him to treat the son or daughter, who has a 'problem'. He suggested a similar conjoint approach might be used in a new suicide prevention center, and was met, reportedly, by outrage from the professor of counseling at the school. 'Growth' is never seen as having any kind of 'subversive' implications, which shows the extent to which this technique and its practitioners have accepted the wider social context.
>
> Clearly, a critical theology must not mistake an abstract concept of growth for the gospel. The gospel is a subversive language, which cannot be confined to an apolitical personalism. While we can learn a great deal about counseling technique from the newer therapies, the theology it represents is often little more than a gloss, or even a pretense.

In the revivalist tradition out of which the mainline Protestant churches have grown, discipleship has usually been viewed as a result of a conversion experience along the lines of Paul's Damascus road occurrence. Holy Spirit is invariably identified with Pentecostal ecstacy; even though the early church demanded repentence in its preaching, and the Holy Spirit came only as a consequence (Acts 2: 38). The Holy Spirit means first of all liberation from sin, not ecstacy as such; and, as Hans-Ruedi Weber has pointed out, Paul was not called to conversion, but to mission.[26]

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[26]Lecture at the Institut Oecumenique, Bossey, Switzerland, 1969.

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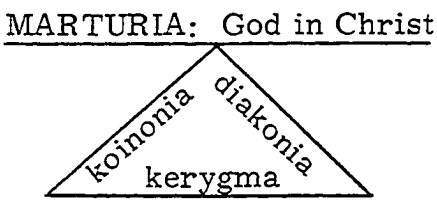
The mission of the church is a marturia (witness) in the world, which has traditionally been conceived in three aspects: as kerygma, as diakonia, and as koinonia. Kerygma is the proclamation of the Word; diakonia is the church's service in the world; and koinonia is the witness of the church as community, which represents God before all mankind, and represents mankind before God. Conceived as a triangle,



it displays the interconnectedness of the three functions in the mission of the church, one of which might be emphasized over the others at a certain point in history, but none of which can be finally eliminated from the church's witness.[27]

Each of these functions has to be concretized in each new mission situation in which the church finds itself. As a formal outline, it represents the contours of the church history: monastic community, Reformation preaching, the service of the worker-priests, etc.; but it remains to discuss the concrete attitude and goals of the church in our situation today. Only by an accurate and bravely

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[27]I am indebted to Horst Symanowski for this scheme, who in turn got it from the apostolate theology of J. Hoekendijk and H.R. Weber.

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realistic assessment of where we are, can we begin to point the way out.

As an eschatological community, the church claims to symbolize in its own life the basic unity of all mankind; but as a sociological phenomenon, it is as sadly divided by class, race, sex, age, etc., as any other institution. Moreover, the church is primarily located among the world's wealthy (with the exception of Latin America), racially white, and politically conservative; so that the Christian proclamation is seen from without in this context, not in a context of 'acted parables' (John Vincent). What we actually do invalidates what we say, no matter how loud we shout it. Speaking about the impending hunger crisis, Helmut Gollwitzer has written quite forcibly about our identity as a church of the rich, when he asks the question...

> Who are we? Answer: We are the rich man. That is, incontestably, the most exact description of us. "We belong to that third of humanity which is concerned with slimming cures, while the other two-thirds are concerned with hunger." And this third consists for the most part of baptized Christians, the other two thirds of unbaptized persons. So things have changed since the days when Paul made collections among the slaves in Corinth for the "poor" in Jerusalem. The baptized persons sit as rich men at a well-covered table, and poor unbaptized Lazarus lies outside at the door--really outside, and therefore even more powerless, easier to be passed over at our meal, than if he lay within our house, as the proletariat formerly did in our countries.[28]

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[28]Helmut Gollwitzer, The Rich Christians and Poor Lazarus (New York: Macmillan, 1970), p. 1.

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This stern indictment of the church raises the central question of the theology of liberation: For whom is the church there? It calls into question the sub-Christian civic religion, which sanctions privilege, encourages self-complacency, and makes Christianity a matter of formal assent and private consolation. While the gospel is not a detailed political program, it does present the krisis of faith as one of radical decision for or against the needs of men and women (Matt. 25:31-46), and thus, has social and political consequences:

> Confessions of faith which do not have as their consequences far-reaching social changes in this world, are matters of private recreation, and therefore have long been tolerated as irrelevant and harmless. We shall only be able to make clear to our contemporaries the relevance of every article of our confession of Faith, if we make clear its political and social revolutionary significance for society.[29]

Thus, the church which is called to realize the unity of mankind in its witness is being called to take sides for the oppressed, both as individuals and as a class. This process already seems to be occurring in Latin America and other Third World countries, but we in the rich countries must not settle for anything less than this. We must, therefore, examine the ubiquitous claim of many Christians, that we as a church must remain neutral in conflict situations in order to be reconciling between the various interests.

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[29]Ibid., p. 2.

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NEUTRALITY VERSUS ADVOCACY: TWO MODELS OF CHRISTIAN WITNESS

The problem becomes, regarding the church's response to the social question, how to avoid the social-political orientation of Christendom, which sought to "Christianize" civilization; but on the other hand, for the church to assume its social and political responsibilities, especially toward the poor and oppressed, without confining itself to an apolitical and demeaning charity, and other forms of 'oppressive generosity'.

To develop this problem historically, we shall examine two different conceptions of urban-industrial mission as they each relate to the problems of social conflict. These will be labeled the 'neutral' or arbitrator approach, and the 'advocate' or partisan approach. These two approaches are not so much 'party lines' as general orientations of mission.

Urban-industrial mission, as it is practiced today, arose after W. W. II over concern for secularization and the failure of traditional forms of church life to meet the needs of the post-war generation. The trend expresses itself not so much in the reduction of church membership (though that too), but a decline in the felt relevance of the institution. In Germany, for example, 95% of the population is on the church tax roles, yet only 10 to 15% of the

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population actually participates; and only 1% of the working class is active in the life of the church. This pattern was repeated in the other urbanized industrial countries of western Europe, which many theologians pointed to as the new missionary situation of the church within Christendom itself. Yet the approach to mission has taken diverse forms, not all of which are mutually complementary. The three approaches can be called 'mission from above', 'neutralist', and 'mission from below'.

Properly speaking, the mission of the church is to witness to the good news, which many Christians feel is sufficient reinforcement to deal with the 'world'. Certainly the gospel is our first concern, but just as undeniably, that gospel is inextricably carried forth in history by means of earthen flasks. Sometimes, we patch up the flask to keep the new wine from getting out, and thereby deny people a drink. Whatever value this metaphor may have, it is at this level of the 'right flask' that I want to approach the problem of mission; that is, as a very human work.

As a first reaction to secularism, there was the revival of aggressive evangelism in traditional forms. There was no attempt to understand and appreciate the secular culture, but only to stem its tide. Thus the French literary critic, Roland Barthes, writes about the purpose of Billy Graham's revival in Paris:

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> ... Billy Graham and his team emphasized over and over again the goal of this campaign: "to revive" France.... Quite obviously, the optics are the same as Eisenhower's in his explanations of the atheism of the French. France, in the eyes of the world, is characterized by its rationalism, its indifference toward faith, the irreligion of its intellectuals (a theme common to America and the vatican--though overestimated). From this nightmare France must be saved. The "conversion" of Paris would in fact have the value of an overpowering example. Atheism conquered by religion in its own cave![30]

This is the background of Billy Graham's revivalism, but Barthes points out another aspect: the political intention:

> In reality, it has to do with a political theme. France's atheism only interests America, because it holds it to be the harbinger of communism. To rouse France from atheism means to rouse it out of its fascination for communism. Billy Graham's campaign was only a McCarthy episode.[31]

This approach to secularity might be termed 'mission from above', insofar as the secular spirit is identified as disaffection from, and a threat to, the status quo (which it may well be). It often ends in moralistic forms of preaching, which condemns the materialism of the age, while accepting its fruits. Mission in this manner fulfils an advocate or partisan role, but usually only for the powerful, the established centers of control. The sacralization of any social order means the closing of the future, which in reality is a 'practical

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[30]Roland Barthes, Mythen des Alltags (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970), p. 14 (translation mine).

[31]Ibid., pp. 14-15.

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atheism', confronting the future with anxiety instead of faith. On this view, there is no understanding of the church's incarnational influx into history, which would mean taking the secular situation seriously.

Criticizing Billy Graham, as Reinhold Niebuhr noted, is a thankless task. Nevertheless, the element of power politics behind revivalism--and religion in general--has not escaped the notice of many secular people. That form of advocacy which serves to mask the political interests of the strong is rejected out of hand as partisanship for the wrong people, and hence, as anti-gospel.

The two main forms of urban-industrial mission, however, are not so easily criticized, and demand a more sophisticated analysis. Both forms understand themselves in a political or social sense, in that they recognize that the laws applying to cases of individual conflict are different from, or are even superseded by, the laws applying to social conflict (if, for purposes of discussion, we can make that distinction). To put it another way, the quantitative aspect of groups creates qualitative differences and variables. Thus, they might both criticize certain attempts of industrial missioners to approach workers in the factories on a strictly personal level (with the blessings of management) as an extension of usual forms of pastoral care and counseling. Built into these well-meaning efforts at industrial ministry is an ignorance of the structural conflicts between labor and capital; and a consequent failure to see that worker

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discontent, both on and off the job, may be related to social structures which produce these conflicts. Under such circumstances of systemic antagonism, the individualistic approach to reconciliation will only aim at the goal of outer social harmony, which is achieved through conflict reduction; and perhaps, amelioration of some of the more blatant abues of management. In this conception of industrial mission, the reduction of manifest conflict is viewed as true reconciliation, that is, the conversion of manifest conflict into latent conflict. Much of the church's talk about 'reconciliation' is in fact only this kind of conflict reduction through individualistic solutions to problems defined from the start as 'personal' or 'individual' problems. Thus, the individualistic response to the problem of social conflict is, at its worst, the individualizing of social conflict, and the suppression of the real problem in favor of some side issue. The use of encounter groups in hierarchical organizations, such as the army, function primarily in this capacity, and are by no means politically neutral. When they reach the limit of personality conflicts, and disclose the structural and role-related conflicts in the organization, such groups are usually suppressed. They are used only as long as they stabilize a conflict situation, and are not tolerated when they show the need for basic structural change.

Both the neutral and the advocate conceptions of urban-industrial mission take account of the structural context of conflict,

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and reject a purely individualistic ministry to the political and economic spheres.

The 'neutral' approach sees its role as a mediator between the two sides of the social antagonism, to create communication, to overcome hostilities which are reflected in distorted views of the other side, and so on. It seeks to gain the trust of both sides as a disinterested third party, with only benevolent good will as its motivation. This approach is typical for many British and American industrial missions (with exceptions) and usually implies a basic acceptance of the capitalist social system. Its social goal is to strengthen what J.K. Galbraith has called 'countervailing powers', or the system of checks and balances built into a tripartite system of labor, industry, and government.

Though this is a serviceable model in many cases of conflict, such as the recent mediation of the National Council of Churches in the Wounded Knee siege, it tends to be viewed with suspicion by many parties to conflict, especially those who do not accept the capitalist (as distinct from the democratic) relations of production. Scott Paradise, formerly of the Detroit Industrial Mission, relates a question posed to E.R. Wickham, who previously headed up the Sheffield Industrial Mission:

> Reacting to one of Ted Wickham's presentations, made during a visit from England, a labor lawyer asked him if it was not always

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necessary for the Church to be on the side of the status quo.

> "For example," he asked, "would the church ever stand publically against General Motors in a strike?" I think Ted denied the implication at the time. But he has suggested that an industrial mission must accept the basic power relationships as they are. And D.I.M. might be crippled if it did publicly stand against GM in one of its conflicts with the union.[32]

Independent of Bishop Wickham's actual position, this statement raises quite clearly the issue between neutralists and advocates, regarding social conflict. The labor lawyer--an advocate both in the technical sense, and the moral sense used here--does not see the neutralist as a disinterested third party, but as an unofficial public relations man for management. Whatever the neutralists might perceive their role to be in conflict situations, the advocate is raising the question, whether or not the 'neutralist' position does not automatically favor the stronger side of the issue. If it can be shown that the relationship betwee, say, labor and capital (or for that matter, labor and the union hierarchy) is an exploitative relationship, and thereby productive of conflict (latent or manifest), then the advocate for the weaker side can fairly ask: How can one be a reconciler under such circumstances without being partisan? Neutralism in this case is no longer a provisional tactic, but a basic commitment to non-commitment, on the grounds that the message of Jesus Christ

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[32]Scott Paradise, Detroit Industrial Mission (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), pp. 132-133.

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somehow transcends the concrete issues involved.

To be sure, all people act from their finite, limited, perspectives, and thus stand under judgment, whether they be managers, laborers, union leaders, etc. Yet the inescapable judgment should not be confused with neutrality toward all parties in conflict. The argument of one minister, that the church has a ministry to farm owners as well as farmworkers in the grape strike may be true; but it was said in such a way as to imply indifference to the historical exploitation of migrant workers. By converting the relative neutrality of the church into absolute neutrality, the church does in fact stand on the side of the status quo, the "basic power relationships as they are."

At first glance, this social analysis might seem simplistic, for it implies an easy identification of exploiter and exploited. In some cases this is true, though the majority of cases are so laden with complexity, that any easy solutions are scotched. Yet this dilemma, too, has been used as an alibi to avoid partisan commitment where commitment is obviously appropriate. The argument of many people, that the church does not have the competence in international affairs to judge the moral issues of our Vietnam commitment, was used quite spuriously to avoid taking a partisan stand.

As I have tried to develop it, the issue between the neutralist and the advocate roles must be seen as relative and tactical. The

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fundamental commitment of the church to an equalitarian community in its own life is a sign of nonconformity to all artificial social distinctions, which assign more value to some persons than others. The maintenance of such social discrimination through "the basic power relationships as they are" is not a matter of indifference, but of grave Christian concern. Neutrality is indifference to the dehumanization of social inequality, if it intends only a modification of this unequal situation, but not complete equality. Herein lies the absoluteness of advocacy: the commitment to a total alternative society, which is free, open, and equalitarian.

The validity of neutrality lies in the fact, that a neutral third party can sometimes serve the underdog better as a mediator, than as a direct spokesman or partisan. Of course, this is tactical, and any group that chooses this course should be clear (at least to itself) where it stands with regard to the weaker side of the conflict.[33]

The whole problem of partisanship is certainly touchy in the church, especially in America where we tend to shy away from conflict strategies and to rely more on good will. But 'good will' is not a reliable factor in social action for real liberation. By its very

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[33]A concrete example of a group that is trying to be neutral and to act as a 'positive' mediator without a basic commitment to the weaker side will be discussed below in the section on the Ontario Involvement Corps.

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real commitment to the values of the middle class (because that is its constituency), we may be forced to admit, that the middle class church can do little more than appropriate the rhetoric of liberation movements without doing anything to help them along. Speaking of the motives and realities of the 1954 school desegregation decision, James Baldwin saw the real motive as a need of the United States to curry favor with the recently emerged and emerging African states. He judges the more idealistic interpretation harshly:

> ... The sloppy and fatuous nature of American good will can never be relied upon to deal with hard problems. These have been dealt with, when they have been dealt with at all, out of necessity--and in political terms, anyway, necessity means concessions made in order to stay on top. I think this is a fact, which it serves no purpose to deny, but, whether it is a fact or not, this is what the black population of the world, including Black Americans, really believe.[34]

Out of my own (limited) experience, I tend to share this view. It seems unlikely that the middle class will ever become so idealistic as to renounce its privileges or material self-interest in favor of greater equality for all. That does not mean that we as middle class people cannot <u>individually</u> begin a life-style of self-sacrifice, which others can see, accept, or reject. But that is already to introduce a <u>krisis</u> into suburbia, and in effect, challenges the middle class ideology to its very core.

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[34]Baldwin, p. 95.

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One such group that has tried to develop an alternative (partisan) life-style, which is both political and supports the working class (as the social underlings in W. Germany) is the Gossner Mission, to which we now turn.

GOSSNER MISSION AS AN ADVOCATE MODEL OF THE CHURCH

Under the rubric, gesellschaftliche Diakonie (social diaconate), Horst Symanowski of the Gossner Mission (Mainz, W. Germany) outlines an advocate model of Christian service, which recognizes the dehumanization and object status of individuals under modern conditions of production and reproduction. In discussing the possibilities, limits, and goals of pastoral care in factories, Symanowski concludes that it is necessary to alter the system for the sake of man:

> One must probably fight against these anonymous powers and gods of our technical and economic system which desire man's unconditional subjection. But this is hard and risky because man receives his daily bread from these very forces. Precisely at this point, however, pastoral care is a confession to man. And is it not at the same time thereby a confession to that God who risked himself for the sake of man? It is an error to expect from pastoral work in the plant mere pacification and the improvement of the atmosphere of the plant. For the object of pastoral care is not the improvement of production but the humanization of organized work, and also, for just this reason, the alteration of a system that makes men mere cogs in the technological and economic apparatus.... The possibilities of industrial pastoral work lie in this, that Christians in the factories will not emigrate secretly with their beliefs but will witness to them where they are by the fact that, like their Lord, they are always "for" other people or their fellowship. Then

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> they will continually come back again to the point at which they need the renewal of their commission and encouragement for their daily service to their neighbor.[35]

To affirm that people live their lives in the world is also to accept the church as a sign in the world, and not a religious ghetto unaffected by history. This sets an ethical standard for vocation in the world, for Christian service cannot be equated with one's work or profession (which many, if not most, people in industrial society find to be pointless anyway). Moreover, the dominance of men in the production roles of society deeply affects the relative status of men and women to the disadvantage of women. This means, in consequence, that no simple equation can be made between Christian vocation and work in its normal sense.

Vocation is a calling to serve the other, whatever one's needs are, as a witness to the cross and the lordship of Christ in one's own life. It raises not only questions about the physical or moral needs of others, but questions of personal identity as well. Such questioning is usually reciprocal, for the people one would serve will always ask the question: why do you do this? What is the angle? The suspicion of many exploited people, that there is an angle, can only be overcome through concrete acts of solidarity, which make the

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[35]H. Symanowski, The Christian in an Industrial Society (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), p. 128.

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Christian motivation visible. The necessity of suffering and sacrifice in this process is inescapable, as Christian tradition has always affirmed.

The tactic developed at Gossner Mission to carry out the social diaconate might be termed 'institutional infiltration'. The idea is to form a cadre, which will commit itself for a certain amount of time to work within an organization--a factory, the police department, a department store--, in order to experience for oneself the actual situation of the people within the organization, to reflect critically on that experience, and to organize people to take responsibility for their situation.

Symanowski suggests several ways in which the service of the social diaconate can be realized within organizational structures, without confining oneself strictly to an individualistic form of pastoral care or to neutralism:

--keeping organizations open to change and in motion;
--standing alongside those who work within them and protecting them against manipulation and violations of human dignity, because Jesus Christ preferred to be despised himself rather than allow another to be treated with contempt;
--discarding outmoded taboos; raising questions, even uncomfortable ones; unmasking intransigent insistence upon the status quo and its (perhaps religious) rationalizations as sinful bondage to the "old age";
--considering the possibility of a new beginning, and helping to create the stabilizing nuclei of a new social reality;
--refusing to regard as final any enmity between men or between their groups and organizations;
--breaking down walls of division between races, peoples, religions, and ideologies, because Jesus Christ set himself

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> to demolishing the walls of hostility between men which also separate us from God (Eph. 2:14).[36]

Symanowski is aware that advocacy has its dangers, and that ethical questions must be raised against an uncritical view of group egotism:

> Involvement in organizations often means that the Christian comes to share a group interest which stands in competition with the interests of other groups. He will therefore have to be careful, on the one hand, never to represent the interest of his group as the ultimate goal for all, but advocate it only to the extent that it does not harm or defraud the brother in the other group. He will have to strive to keep his group from making any totalitarian claims.[37]

The unresolved issue between neutralist and advocate approaches to social conflict is not just one of social analysis, but different historical developments in England and America, on the one hand, and Germany on the other. England (and to a lesser extent, America) still rests secure in the benign view of British, white, Protestant capitalism, that the received tradition is basically good and right. The predominance of television serials on the BBC, which glorify in some way the 19th century entrepreneur or imperialist, and the 20th century businessman testifies to the implicit faith in classical liberalism. Germany, on the other hand, has never had a strong middle class which was committed to the ideals of freedom, equality, and personal rights. When this class did arise, it was willing to

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[36]Ibid., p. 113.

[37]Ibid., pp. 113-114.

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trade off these ideals for economic advantage in the emerging capitalist state. Unlike France and England, where the revolutionary bourgeoisie effectively destroyed the aristocracy and the feudal system with the weapon of liberal capitalism, science, and technology, Germany was modernized and unified by the Prussian Junkers under Bismarck, who had no interest in the humanist ideals of the French revolution. This development on the corpse of a feudal social structure eventually led to the destruction of the Weimar Republik, for the Germans did not have the centuries of experience and tradition of parties exchanging power in government, as had the British. Consequently, German humanism was never able to take root, and the humanists remained a misunderstood and desparate lot. Kant resorted to the 'inner emigration' of religion, for he saw in the context of his times no chance for the historical realization of a total world community based on the categorical imperative. Other humanists emigrated or were exiled (Nietzsche, Marx); went mad (Hoelderlin); or succumbed to the mystical tradition, and became conservative (Hegel, Fichte, etc.; in the 20th century, Heidegger).[38]

While Lucien Goldmann's judgment, that Germany underwent a 'sick' development, may hold, it does not obviate the need in

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[38]Cf. Richard Grunberger, The 12-Year Reich (New York: Ballantine, 1972), ch. 1; Lucien Goldmann, Immanuel Kant (London: NLB, 1971).

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England and France (as well as America) to struggle against the capitalist relations of production; for precisely in the willingness of the exploited groups to fight the causes of exploitation lies the 'health' of these societies. But precisely because the Germans have been so close to the moral decay of the market system in the 20th century, they have been able to see beyond its benign image to its realities; while England and America still believe that the image is the reality.[39]

To apply indiscriminately the categories of a certain historical tradition to another tradition (as many 'vulgar' Marxists do) may be misleading and dangerous; but it is safe to say, that America on the whole still thinks in the liberal concepts of the 17th and 18th century, when in the 20th century they have become largely obsolete. This does not mean that democracy and personal freedom as such are undesirable, but that they neither guarantee against infringement from the economic forces, nor do they provide any concrete guide as to the kind of society one wants to aim at. As an example, unrestrained production and consumption is diametrically opposed to the rational conservation of finite resources. To enter a plea of 'personal right' to consume whatever one pleases, is to obscure the real problems of ecology; as well as the privileged position of the 20% of the world's

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[39]Cf. Thomas Mann, The Magic Mountain (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960) for a graphic description of the decay of European culture.

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population, who can afford to exercise this supposed 'right'.

At this point, the socialist analysis of 'bourgeois democracy' transcends the traditions of Germany or America, for it sees in the other 80% of the world the real meaning of world market forces. The dependency of the Third World is sealed in America, in Europe, or in Russia, while they have no 'democratic' say over what happens to them. Moreover, the voting patterns of the Western countries tend toward those groups which can increase the material living standard within these countries, and thereby, increase the impoverishment of the Third World. When there are no effective channels for international control over multinational corporations, for worldwide participatory democracy, then the problem of conflict and advocacy becomes acute. It is in this context, that the neutralist approach to industrial mission deals with conflict in its narrow and manifest forms, while the advocate approach takes conflict in its broadest possible terms--globally and historically--as inseparable from the more parochial aspects of its practice.

The advocate critique understands social conflict in the main as structurally conditioned, and not primarily as a result of individual culpability for selfish behavior. It is not usually individuals as such within the corporate system, who cause conflict, but roles within socially-sanctioned patterns of behavior--competitiveness, individualism, etc.--which society engenders (or at least reinforces over

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other character patterns, such as cooperativeness) through its socialization process. The neutralist goal of extending communication between labor and management is often seen from the advocate perspective as naive; for it assumes that lack of communication causes the conflict, rather than the conflict causing lack of communication. Indeed, if the suppression of communication serves the interests of the powerful, then the establishment of communication will actually make the conflict manifest, rather than bring about harmony.

It is the understanding of conflict in terms of historical, dynamic categories that makes the advocate approach of the Gossner Mission theoretically superior to the neutralist version of urban-industrial mission (U.I.M.). Generally, this is beginning to be seen, not only in U.I.M., but in all fields of 'social work'. The static categories of the past, such as 'urban' or 'industrial', are now giving way to process categories, which can explain dependency in terms of conflict between the 'satellites' and the 'metropolises'.

The crisis in U.I.M. is not just institutional, social, or political, but, as Dwain Epps puts it, a <u>hermeneutical crisis</u> as well:

> Words were discovered to have hidden meanings, to mask the reality. Those were the very words which we sought to use to verbalize our experiences, our philosophy and our action methods. More than that, they conditioned our very action, often without our knowing it. Now, since words like "international community", "dialogue", "development", "equal opportunity", etc. were found to disguise reality, we are obliged to put our

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> urban mission vocabulary to the test too. Do our terms help us to generate change, or are they so conditioned that they bind us to the past? Perhaps by seeking out the hidden meanings of our words we can begin a critical evaluation of our work and free ourselves to move with history.[40]

In the case of the term 'urban-industrial' we are dealing with apolitical categories, which mirror the need of the post-war Western societies for readjustment to changes, which have reached crisis proportions. It has basically served the needs of the moment, and can rightly be considered as conservative social therapy:

> The fact is that the urban centers of the North American economy were beginning to decay at an alarming rate. Whether the "secular" terms "urban renewal" and "community development", or the "ecclesiastical" one, "urban mission", came first is not important. What is important is that they arose at practically the same time in response to a single crisis which had to be overcome if the status quo system was to be maintained.... Now it is clear that the churches often had to prod the "secular" institutions very hard to get them to move and to begin funding inner-city development programs. But then that has been the traditional function of the church in the "one-dimensional" society.[41]

While the church, through its industrial missions, helped to grease the machine, in order to increase its rationalization and efficiency, it did not raise the question as to whether the machine itself is humane or not; whether it ought to be replaced by another system and how to go about that task. At that level, the imagination

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[40]Dwain Epps, "A New Form of Christian Ministry?: Some Reflections on the Urban Mission of the Church", Risk, V: 3/4 (1969), p. 91.

[41]Ibid., pp. 91-92.

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failed; and as Hugo Assmann has remarked, "Theology goes no further than reform in the Rich World."[42]

It is apparent today, that theology has performed an alibi-function for much that is oppressive in the Western world. The theology of the Rich World has no real categories by which to understand oppression, and the ubiquitous use of the term 'liberation' in the theology of the West is already robbing the word of its provocative impact. Perhaps the flippant way in which we quote Simone Weil's phrase, '...to give a voice to the voiceless', is only a mask for our own cultural and linguistic imperialism: we create theologies for others, but not for ourselves. Certainly, we have come to the point, where we can no longer ride piggy-back on the theologies of others. As one German observer has put it,

> ...it is obvious that European theologians can no longer up-grade their conflicts to a world level, but must first organize their own conflicts.
>
> We must, therefore, develop the language and analytical instruments to do this. Until now we have not done this--although we try to use a Marxist or other language. We are damned in other respects. European imperialism is, in the first place, linguistic and cultural imperialism. This has led to the present situation of speechlessness (the inability to communicate).
>
> Therefore, we must reflect because our situation has a world-wide relevance. I believe this opens up the chance to survive this moratorium by seeing all these problems as common

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[42] Risk, IX:2 (1973), 32.

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> problems, having to interpret them anew, which is called solidarity in action. But my dilemma at the moment is that I only see chaos and darkness.[43]

It is in the next chapter that we will look at two attempts at advocacy with a critical eye turned toward the wider horizon of social conflict. Neither one is an unqualified success, but this is not a problem in itself. Both represent significant gains in my own awareness of politics and power, and from that standpoint, are object lessons from which others can learn or throw a different light on the same realities.

The last chapter will deal with certain theological responses to social conflict.

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[43] Ibid., p. 67.

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CHAPTER II

SOCIAL WORK IN A LIBERATION PERSPECTIVE

The term 'liberation' has been used here in corollation with oppression; and both terms refer primarily to systems or structures of society, which can in principle be changed. However, the process of change needs to be spelled out concretely--both the means and the ends--, if 'liberation' is to be a word with meaning. Otherwise, it will suffer the same fate as many other guiding ideas--word inflation. Indeed, the process has already begun wherever the term 'liberation' is used without a critical analysis of oppression, in a purely privatistic or reformistic fashion. Liberation must be concrete in its praxis, or the hope for freedom remains idealistic and illusory.

In this chapter, an analysis of social work as a praxis of liberation will be discussed. I have chosen two experiences: one with the Hauser method in Mainz, W. Germany; the other is a six month observation of a community organizing project of the United Methodist All Nations Foundation under the leadership of Darwin Wagner and Dave Harshman.

TYPES OF SOCIAL WORK

Community organization has gradually developed into an important form of social work. Whereas individual casework has

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been the predominant mode of social work, dominated in large part by a psychological approach to the client, the community organizing model assumes that problems of poverty, community development, and other issues are collective in nature and demand a collective solution. To a large extent, the transition from an individualistic social work to collective social work reflects the increasing victimization of more and more social groups by the market system. It is becoming obvious that unemployment is a result of structural conditions, and not primarily personal attitudes of laziness, lack of discipline, etc. In this regard, Coates and Silburn point out the transition in thinking among social workers:

> The fifties were the heyday of what is now referred to as the 'psychiatric deluge' in social-work training programmes. During this period social casework was seen as a form of intensive social therapy, concentrating on revealing the 'latent' personality problems which underlie such 'manifest' symptoms as shortage of money. Heavily influenced by ideas borrowed from psychoanalysis, social work theory emphasized the essential individuality of each client's problems; thus, by their training, social workers were encouraged to interpret all public ills as personal problems, and saw their role as helping each client adjust to the 'realities' of his environment.... Mercifully this regrettable era in the history of social work is past; increasingly social workers have come to understand that the problem of poverty is rooted, not in the inadequate personalities of its victims, but in the basic economic and class structure of our society. [1]

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[1] Ken Coates and Richard Silburn, Poverty (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), pp. 16-17.

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The change from individual forms of social work to community organization work has not necessarily been militant. Many community organizers see their task strictly in terms of advocating more street lights, more adequate schools, and other reforms to which all groups, rich and poor alike, could agree. Such a system-imminent approach to community organization places no burden of structural change on the system, and serves to smooth over manifest conflicts, which are structurally conditioned.[2] Nevertheless, lessons can be learned from this approach, for both it and the more militant, critical forms of community organization have a common starting point: the concrete needs of the people; usually their survival needs, though any painful issue will do.

Mueller and Nimmermann have discerned three forms of social work on the spectrum of possibilities, which they term: 1) the institutional-conservative approach, which includes the conventional forms of case work, government programs, such as O.E.O., etc.; 2) the reform-pedagogical approach, which is a process of organizing outside of established structures or programs, and usually without formal leaders, but confining its activities and demands to "things"; 3) the aggressive approach, as practiced by Danilo Dolci, Saul

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[2]Murray Ross, Community Organization (New York: Harper & Row, 1967).

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Alinsky, Si Kahn, Paulo Freire, the Young Lords, the Black Panthers, etc., which starts with "things" (concrete painful issues, such as the welfare bureaucracy, no jobs, inadequate nourishment) and proceeds to structural critique and total alternatives to the existing system.[3]

The first approach can be classified as community organization "from above", the attempt to buy off the marginal groups and their leadership through government programs, which are usually intended to fail, but which integrate potentially unsettling forces into the system. Their potential value lies in making the programs--such as Project Headstart--work, even though they were set up to fail. Thus, they become a bone of contention between the recipients of the program, and the establishment, which intended something quite different from the actual outcome.

The second form of community organization is more difficult to classify, since it may use conflict tactics from time to time; yet it too is community organization "from above", for it sees conflict as only a temporary imbalance in a socially-harmonious system, which must be brought back into balance by reforms. What was once accomplished by the individual social worker is now to be done by the

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[3]Cf. C. Wolfgang Mueller and Peter Nimmermann, Stadtplanung und Gemeinwesenarbeit (München: Juventa, 1971).

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clients themselves, since the magnitude of the problems has increased beyond the methods of casework. Nevertheless, both the first and second approach share the basic premise, that all system-endangering conflicts are to be avoided, reduced, co-opted, or otherwise ventilated, without any basic change in the system that causes the conflicts.

Since the third form of "social work" is fundamentally different in conception, it is aptly called community organizing "from below". To be sure, it is not an accepted part of the professional curriculum, though it has been the accepted method of the labor movement, civil rights movement, anti-poverty movement, and increasingly of middle-class protest in the consumer movement and personal liberation movements. To distinguish its tactics from the 'reform-pedagogical' mode of community organization, Claus Offe outlines three characteristics, which are indispensable for grassroots organizing against established power structures:

> The general condition for keeping citizen initiatives from being re-directed into fruitless self-help organizations of an administrative adjustment and reform process, and thereby sacrifice their political intentions, consists in such groups not holding to the rules within which limits the official reform policies proceed. That means concretely: the factual, temporal, and social restrictions under which especially the community government stands, must be ruptured in the course of citizen initiatives.
>
> The 'factual' dimension: citizen initiatives lose their political meaning, if they merely hold to the pre-formulated alternatives, plans, and offerings in the political system, and do not proceed to demands, whose fulfillment the administration does not already consider....

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> This principle has consequences for the temporal dimension of the strategy of citizen initiatives.... The slogan NOW! means: cross out the itinerary of the administration, leave no time for stalling evasion, in the course of which they can exact the cost for the concessions at other places and by subterfuge.
>
> The radicality, by which the citizen initiatives can alone justify themselves, manifests itself exclusively in the social and organizational means of which their actions make use. Bureaucracies can, in principle, only deal with individual 'representatives' of group interests, who can show a 'right to negotiate'; all else they leave to the police. But as soon as citizen initiatives restrict themselves to the forms of contentions, which bureaucracies are alone equal to, they destroy the conditions of their own success. All successful citizen initiatives therefore use any means, beside and above negotiations, which are the only basis of their sanctioning power (and therefore criminalized): go-in, occupation, blockade, purposeful sabotage and boycott.[4]

The distinctions drawn between these three kinds of social work relate primarily to political perspective, and should not be seen as mutually exclusive on the level of method. Community organizing of any kind will always have to deal with individuals and to meet immediate, survival needs. The 'aggressive' approach takes both of these methods seriously, even though it criticizes the premise and methods upon which they are based.

On the level of method, the two forms of community organizing are, in one respect, similar, in that they both depend upon popular participation and leadership. Though specialists may be used

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[4]Claus Offe, "Citizen Initiatives and the Reproduction of the Labor Force in Neo-Capitalism", in Buergerinitiativen (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1971), pp. 161-163 (translation mine).

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in an advisory capacity, they play only a marginal role. The group with the problem (or problems) must take the initiative in solving it. Thus, both methods exclude, in principle, paternalism in the internal workings of the group, and stress personal and group responsibility.

From the standpoint of the church, the community organizing model of group work (of either kind) is eminently practical, in that the church has a long tradition of small groups (house churches, prayer meetings, counseling groups, etc.); as well as a strategic social location in the community sphere (reproduction sphere), where many of the latent conflicts in the industrial (production) sphere are made manifest. The stress on responsibility and freedom in the social sphere is also consistent with the Christian view of man, and avoids 'false generosity' (Freire) and the 'seamy side of charity' (Illich), which creates dependency and submissiveness.

THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL GOALS OF GROUPS

Groups have both internal and external goals or tasks, so that the neglect of either one or the other results in a breakdown of identity and ineffectiveness.

The internal goal of the group is its identity through time, its continuity and solidarity. When a group loses its identity, it often compensates for this loss by emphasizing activity. As long as the internal motivation for action is missing, however, activity

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remains blind activism, and serves only to hide insecurity about the group's self-understanding or raison d'etre.

The opposite danger occurs when a group gains inner cohesiveness, but lacks any goals outside itself. In this case, the group becomes introverted and loses its power to attract new members. Eventually, these groups die for lack of vision.

The external and internal goals of a group represent a polar tension, which any group must maintain in order to sustain itself and grow. This is true for the church also--especially the church--which has always known itself as a worshipping community (internal goal) and as a community in mission in the world (external goal). The church has at times known death through neglect of one pole or the other. As the Old Testament says somewhere: Where there is no vision, the people perish.

The activism of the late fifties and the sixties was in large part a response to social issues which are still before us, and with which we must yet reckon. Yet in it all, there was a certain desperation about our identity as a nation, and, for the social activists in the church, the identity of the church as the people of God. Much of the protest against the social activists in the church has come because of this void, and because people hunger for a word which will have meaning for their lives.

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The reaction against activism is to some extent a concern for the internal goals of the church; but probably more due to frustration and weariness. Unfortunately, the need to re-examine our identity, our theologies, and so on, has not actually led to that need being fulfilled. Repetition is not reinterpretation. The mechanical repetition of fundamental theology, of Biblicism, and a self-complacency about established church structures (institutional fundamentalism) and forms of ministry is not incarnation, but simply the introversion of the church, a turning away from mission at a time when it was never more necessary.

Thus, there is a need for a re-examination of our historical roots, to know who and what we have been in the past, in order to know what is 'Christian' today. But this task of critical historical reflection is quite different from an ahistorical reading of Christian confessions, fundamentalism, or a pietistic emphasis on personal conversion. We must pose the question of our identity as the church in terms of the fullness of the tradition, not just a reaffirmation of our own personal religious upbringing and bias. We cannot approach the Bible and Christian tradition with fixed ideas about what we will find there, but must let it speak its own word. Then it becomes possible to reinterpret the tradition for our problems and situation, instead of repeating formulae.

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The historical approach poses the problem of the external and internal goals in such a way as to exclude both blind activism and pietistic introversion. These are the restricted alternatives of America's civic religion--both in its liberal and conservative forms--which an historical approach puts into question--radically. As Dr. Thomas Trotter has stated, the true alternative in American religion is not between the liberal and conservative Protestant denominations; but between the culture Protestantism--conservative and liberal--, and the historical churches--Catholic, Orthodox, Anglo-Catholic--which have a greater sense for history and consequently are more able to transcend culture.

THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY WORK

The main theological task for a recovery of a sense of mission is to redefine the meaning of 'mission'. Mission, as it is popularly understood, is a congeries of images about revivalism, conversion, the 19th century missions to the non-Western world, etc., which belong to the past. The crisis in mission is a failure to understand the basic need of our divided world and the application of outmoded strategies--sending missionaries, irrelevant aid, crisis strategies without long term planning, and so forth.

Theologically, individualism has neglected in the Bible itself the aspects, which explicitly use social categories, such as Luke

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4:18-19; not to mention the ubiquitous demand for social justice in the Old Testament. Though these passages are not revolutionary in the modern sense, they are political and stand in contradiction to the established reality. In Matthew, what one does is more important than what one says. In Luke, mission is partly defined as setting at liberty those who are oppressed (Luke 4:18). Mission in these passages has socio-political significance, and contradicts the underlying assumption of most missionary endeavors: that it must somehow 'pay off' for the church in terms of members and benefits.

The central thesis of this work is that mission is a vicarious representation of the weak, the underrepresented, the oppressed. The constant institutional temptation to seek for a pay off for services rendered denies the view of Christian service as life freely given.

On this theological basis, the external goal of the church is nonreflexive, in that the church lives out its service in the world because of its Lord alone, and not for institutional gain (though people are often attracted to the church with an outward social thrust). This puts several limitations on the social diaconate of the church:
1) The church is not there to satisfy the consumption needs of people in the spiritual realm. The consumption model neither involves Christians in the external goal and mission of the church; nor do the objects of such a mission in the long run receive more than 'the seamy side of charity' (Illich), since they have not been involved in

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meeting their own needs. This also has negative consequences for the authoritarian role, which the congregation often expects the minister to play.

2) The church is present to meet the needs of people, whoever they are and whatever their condition.

3) The church that does community work does it for the sake of these persons, and not as a come-on to build up the congregation. It is a congregation for the world.

4) Social work must recognize the interdependence of the urban and industrial spheres, and that social issues are structurally interconnected, rather than isolated problems.

Within this framework, one can define basic goals and strategies for community work.

Goals:

1) One must aim at a slow but permanent transition to a revolutionary consciousness among persons who are oppressed by society;

2) a critical stance toward the society, rather than integration, that is, critical distance;

3) work for and with the society.

Strategies:

1) to create a social problem-consciousness;

2) to help people toward self-help, i.e., help people to act on their own;

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3) to help persons to see their social dependency and the relevance of their own problems for coalitions with others, in order to solve them (politicization).

These general goals and strategies can be implemented through the method of community organizing, provided one is aware of the limitations and political framework within which the specific method is conceived and employed. This is the use of system-immanent means to reach a system-transcending goal.

The transition from 'the church for itself' to the 'church for the world' means to strengthen the external direction of the congregation, in order to overcome ecclesiastical introversion. This, of course, involves a rupture in the consciousness of most congregations, which are directed primarily toward developing inner-congregational programs, which the congregation in turn 'consumes'. That such an educational task can be carried out has been shown in a few instances, such as some of the All-Nations Foundation community concern projects; one of which will be discussed later on.

The two community organizing schemas presented here are primarily pedagogical tools by which to lay the groundwork and basic rules for social involvement, and should not be viewed as automatic guarantees of success. Underneath the multiformity of social situations certain laws do obtain, and these give us clues to deal with the society.

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PROBLEMS OF A SUBURBAN COMMUNITY: THE SATELLITE SUBURB OF LERCHENBERG (MAINZ, W. GERMANY)

Though there may be time lags in their development, various social trends in the Western industrial countries seem to be common lines of evolution. Many of these trends have reached a stage in Europe where the United States was twenty or thirty years ago, so that one can rightly ask whether an analysis of a German suburb has any bearing on the situation in the U.S. To some extent the social situation is different there, but not completely. There is enough similarity in the politics of urban planning--for instance, that politics precedes planning, rather than the other way around--that such an example can be very instructive.[5]

Mainz is a 2000 year old city in the Main-Rhine region of West Germany, which today is one of the fastest growing areas of that country. In 1945, the allied occupation forces redrew the state lines between Hessen-Nassau and Rhineland-Palatinate along the Rhine river, thus separating Mainz from Mainz-Kastel on the other side of the river. This separated Mainz from its main industry and tax base, and forced it to start a campaign to attract new industry to the region, which has been the source of both growth and social problems. The

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[5]I draw upon both a report by a group at the Gossner Mission and my own experience in two other suburbs of Mainz in 1971.

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location of the Suedwestfunk television station and IBM plant in Mainz created new jobs, and has made the construction of new housing units necessary.

Because Mainz is surrounded by farm land,[6] expansion proceeds around the hub of the old city, with high rise apartment buildings shooting into the air, seemingly from nowhere. These are the satellite suburbs which are being built to accommodate the growth, of which Lerchenberg is perhaps an outstanding example, since it was supposed to be a model city to celebrate the 2000th birthday of Mainz.

These towns have caused a great deal of conflict between the original residents of Mainz and the newcomers. Much of this is socio-economic, since IBM and the television station attract the 'new working class', which usually earns more than the others, and can find housing in these areas fairly fast. The new suburbs--especially Lerchenberg--become 'ghettoes' for IBM employees, and creates the impression of snobbishness among the old-timers; an impression which the company reinforces through its 'corporate image'.

IBM rents whole high-rises on a permanent basis, in order to supply immediate housing needs for its highly mobile employees,

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[6]Prof. E. Muehlenberg has observed that taxation is based on actual land use in Germany, rather than potential land value on the market, so that zoning does not affect land use, as it does in the U.S. Hence, it is possible to have urban and rural areas in close proximity.

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as well as the foreign employees who come to Mainz for extended training sessions. The factor of mobility is one of the main problems affecting life in Lerchenberg, since one cannot sink deep roots in the community, and thus have a concern for the quality of life there (beyond basic necessities like public transportation, medical care, and shopping possibilities). Children cannot form lasting friendships, and are moved from school to school; wives become isolated within four walls.

The problem posed by mobility affords insight into the relation between the industrial sphere (production) and the residential sphere (reproduction), which constitutes a relationship of dependence. Mobility is conditioned by the work world; it frees one from old ties and opens new living possibilities. Yet frequent moves lead to rootlessness and isolation from community.

Because of the high rate of mobility, there is also a lack of identity, or anonymity, in which the norms of the social surroundings become weak. This can be liberating, in that it affords freedom from arbitrary control, which is typical of traditional communities. In the long run, though, the lack of human contact becomes unbearable: a problem that is especially acute for housewives, and others, who are not employed in the work world.

The excessive achievement demands of the work world lead to the separation of work and leisure time. Leisure time is primarily

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time to recover from work and to prepare for the next day. Thus, it leads to a privatization of concerns; the 'private person' lacks energy and interest to participate in problems of communal welfare.

The work and residential spheres are separated, in that there is no coordination between communal and industrial planning. In addition, planning proceeds according to the profitability factor, rather than the social needs of the persons living in a community. The lack of infrastructure in Lerchenberg (playgrounds, paved streets, transportation, etc.) was not just an oversight on the part of the builders, but the conscious exclusion of extra costs which do not yield a profit. This pattern occurs over and over again when apartments are too small, when a 25 storey hotel goes up in a residential section, or a school is built along a major thoroughfare. To repeat: politics precedes planning, not planning politics.

The political behavior of persons reflects the socialization they receive in the production sphere. This is especially evident in Germany, where the authoritarian factory system (based on von Clausewitz's philosophy of military command structure and the hierarchy of the Catholic Church) encourages worker passivity in decision-making. The depoliticized behavior of the factory worker extends to all areas of German life, including formal democracy, which it undercuts at the grassroots level.

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In all of these problems, there is a basic causal connection between the production and reproduction spheres. Their interrelatedness is fundamental to understanding and explaining these phenomena. The interpenetration of urban and industrial spheres means that urban-industrial mission must deal with the total structure of society, not just isolated conflicts.

Nevertheless, the ministry of reconciliation must begin where the conflicts are manifest, the concrete points of tension. This is basic to all organizing theory, including Richard Hauser's method of the 'activating interview', which was used in the Lerchenberg project.

RICHARD HAUSER'S ACTIVATING INTERVIEW

Like Paulo Freire's method of conscientizacao, the Hauser method attempts to 'conscienticize' through groups involved with their own problems. Guy Rammenzweig has written of this method:

> The concerned community is helped to understand its situation through carefully conducted interviews which identify the real problems of that community. The interviews include also a kind of brainstorming about the possible ways to attack the problems, to bring about change and to organize the concerned people. This method has the great advantage of being self-critical, open to corrections and allowing permanent control of the issues. It works successfully with urban problems and usually is able to get a great public support.[7]

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[7]Guy Rammenzweig, "Political Alternatives to Alternative

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While scientific interviews center primarily on lengthy, detailed and quantifiable results, the activating interview is used to activate; to create an awareness of issues, to bring people together for common action. In the process of conscientizacion, isolated individuals with painful problems begin to see that their problems are not just individual or private, for others voice similar pain. The interaction becomes the basis upon which to organize and activate. In many minority communities today, the sight of a researcher with a clipboard evokes hostility, since the researcher rarely has an interest in really effecting change. The activating interview, on the other hand, has as its basic goal, helping people to self-help. There is a close connection between theory and practice, action and reflection, in Hauser's method.

The main pillars of the method are the theories of groups and leaders. Hauser distinguishes three kinds of groups: the mass, the paternalistic group, and the partnership group.

1) The mass is not a group in the sense that the other two are, for it lacks continuity and cohesiveness; rather, it is the absence of these qualities. Consequently, it is merely a collection of individuals, an I-culture, which has no leader, since it is not yet a

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Life-Styles" (an unpublished paper, School of Theology at Claremont, Fall, 1972).

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unified whole. It becomes a unified body when a skillful demagogue successfully manipulates the feelings and insecurities of the mass. Then it becomes a paternalistic group.

2) The paternalistic group is a we-culture, in that the group is cohesive and continuous. Its hierarchical organization, though, means that only a few persons in certain roles actually make the decisions, which affect the rest.

This kind of group can be subdivided into: A) the strong paternalistic group; and B) the mild paternalistic group.

A) The strong paternalistic group uses fear, usually of physical violence, as the main mode of discipline. The ruler is a father-figure with dictatorial powers, such as Stalin.

B) The mild paternalistic group rules its members through withdrawal of love more than direct threats. This method of discipline is typical of the middle class family. When withdrawal of love does not work, it often reverts to strong paternalism.

3) The partnership group is also a we-culture, but is structured differently from paternalism. Decisions are not made by one or two persons on issues pertaining to the group, but authority is delegated according to the problem and various competencies. Thus, everyone in the group has potential for leadership, and everyone is a follower. The actual leadership role shifts from time to time, and that person is accountable to the rest.

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Each type of group has certain types of leadership functions. Hauser discerns three basic types: the influence leader, the natural leader, and the institutional leader; each of whom assumes a different shape, depending upon the group. It may be schematized as follows:

	MASS	PATERNAL. G.	PARTNER. G.
I. natural leader	subversive, instigator	"Big Brother" father figure	leadership delegated for a definite task
II. institutional leader	orderer	"little brother", functionary; (subject to big brother)	expert
III. influence	demagogue	counselor, dark eminence, behind the throne	outside critic, catalyzer, enabler

The ideal group for community organizing purposes is, of course, the partnership group, which is the model for grassroots participation.

This theory of groups assumes that the individual is usually ineffective in solving his or her own problems alone; that only in a cooperative group--even a small one--can the individual hope to solve social problems. It is this assumption that makes the Hauser method humanistically viable, in spite of a certain over-optimism and over-simplification in the conclusions he draws. It is open to correction,

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however.[8]

One of the main problems in group work is to keep the leadership functions straight. This is especially important for the leaders, who often cause problems by consciously or unconsciously assuming a leadership role for which they have no mandate.

The natural leader is a member of a group, accepts most of its values and goals, and is somewhat ahead of it in awareness. In other group theories, this leader is known as the 'group person', 'gatekeeper', etc. The informality of the natural leadership role means that authority is derived primarily from personal charisma.

The influence leader, on the other hand, does not usually come from the group, and is able to see beyond its limited perspectives. In order to affect the course of the group, the influence leader identifies the natural leader, and proceeds to exercise influence in terms of ideas, information, etc. Because the influence leader challenges the group and is a perceived threat, this person is usually disliked.

These two roles are usually distinct, though it is conceivable that one person could perform both roles. Examples could probably be named.

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[8]A more complete exposition of the Hauser method is now out of print, unfortunately. It is to be found in Richard and Hephzibah Hauser, The Fraternal Society.

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The third leadership role is the institutional leader, who represents the institution. This is a formal position of authority, which is delegated by the organization to fill a function in the hierarchy. As such, the institutional leader pursues the goals of the organization, rather than an independent vision; and this activity dominates the institutional leaders relations with the other two kinds of leaders.

Of course, each person is involved in all three roles at some time or other, though usually with different groups. A minister might be an influence leader at school board meetings, a natural leader with the ministerial association, and an institutional leader in the local congregation. However, it may be catastrophic when a minister tries to be a natural leader in a church. It is important to be clear about functions associated with leadership roles.

Simplified as this theory of groups and leadership is, it serves to explain the relation between community organizer and the partnership group. The community organizer is an influence leader, and must refrain from natural leadership functions. For this reason, it is essential for the organizer to get a mandate from the community, in order to operate. When Saul Alinsky was invited to Rochester by white clergymen to organize blacks, he refused. He was willing to organize the white community, but was only willing to work in the black community if they invited him. Since the white power structure

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was so shocked by this, and impugned him in the newspapers, the blacks decided he was one white man they could trust. He was invited in, and founded F.I.G.H.T.

The life of the group is not static, but proceeds through various phases. The first two phases are either aggression or apathy, which in fact are only two sides of the same coin. The aggressive phase is negative, undirected violence, tantrums, cursing, etc. One experiences oppression, but one does not react to the source of it, only scapegoats. Likewise, apathy is a situation of latent violence, characterized by boredom, indecision, and passivity. The Roman orgies and circuses were ways of compensating people for apathetic "unlived lives" (E. Fromm). In this situation, people are usually integrated into a mass or paternalistic system, which hinders them from becoming conscious of their plight or doing anything about it.

Thus, the organizer comes on the scene as an individual combatant, and must get a process of participation going. Saul Alinsky describes the first task of the organizer as creating issues and problems:

> The simple fact is that in any community, regardless of how poor, people may have serious problems--but they do not have issues, they have a bad scene. An issue is something you can do something about, but as long as you feel powerless and unable to do anything about it, all you have is a bad scene. The people resign themselves to a rationalization: it's that kind of world, it's a crumby world, we didn't ask to come into it but we are stuck with it and all we can do is hope that something happens somewhere,

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somehow, sometime. This is usually taken as apathy....[9]

When one has struck on an issue, one has already reached the third stage: the anti-negative phase. A flood of feelings come out against injustice (hence: "anti-negative"), against oppression, inequity, and so forth; which in literature is known as catharsis. Alinsky says, that the first step in community organization is community disorganization. He writes:

> All change means disorganization of the old and organization of the new.
>
> This is why the organizer is immediately confronted with conflict. The organizer dedicated to changing the life of a particular community must first rub raw the resentments of the people of the community; fan the latent hostilities of many of the people to the point of overt expression. He must search out controversy and issues, rather than avoid them, for unless there is controversy people are not concerned enough to act.... An organizer must stir up dissatisfaction and discontent; provide a channel into which the people can angrily pour their frustrations. He must create a mechanism that can drain off the underlying guilt for having accepted the previous situation for so long a time. Out of this mechanism a new community organization arises.[10]

The following two phases are crucial for the organizing process, for they are alternatives which determine the success or failure of an initiative. The group cannot remain in an anti-negative phase for long without a positive goal. It will sink into a secure phase

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[9]Saul Alinsky, Rules for Radicals (New York: Vintage, 1972), p. 119.

[10]Ibid., pp. 116-117.

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after appropriate catharsis, mistaking a release of emotion about a problem with a solution to the problem. This phase easily reverts to apathy, and often only increases the hopelessness about changing anything.

Thus, the job of the organizer is to create a bridge between the anti-negative phase and the social-creative phase. This is a task of timing, in that enough catharsis must occur before the group will respond in creative action against indignities; yet, if one waits too long, the moment for action is lost. Alinsky writes:

> The job then is getting the people to move, to act, to participate; in short, to develop and harness the necessary power to effectively conflict with the prevailing patterns and change them. When those prominent in the status quo turn and label you an "agitator" they are completely correct, for that is, in one word, your function--to agitate to the point of conflict.[11]

The importance of the methods of Hauser, Alinsky, Si Kahn,[12] and others, is a positive appreciation for social conflict, both in its negative and positive aspects, rather than relying on good will to effect change.

The discussion, so far, has centered upon the social-psychological understanding of groups, leadership, and social motivation. The activating interview is the actual game plan or procedure

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[11] Ibid., p. 117.

[12] Si Kahn, How People Get Power (New York: McGraw Hill, 1970).

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with which one goes about getting a group started, selecting an issue, and acting on it.

When coming into a community cold, all one can deal with are a maze of disparate impressions, plus whatever prior experiences one has had in similar situations. This foundation is both inadequate, and yet the sole basis available for estimating the problems. Thus, one must form a provisional judgment or pre-judgment of the community's problems and issues, and write it down in a clear statement. 'To prejudge' a situation, in this case, is not bad, since it is the first step toward becoming aware of preconceptions and stereotypes, and then to systematically criticize them.

Once the prejudgment is written down, one can formulate a few questions and select a few individuals for interviews. These preliminary interviews only inquire about possible irritating issues in the community, and should not arouse hope or promise anything; for once the process of change starts, only frustration results when it fails. The primary purpose of the preliminary interview is to check out the accuracy or inaccuracy of the prejudgment.

After the preliminary interviews, one is ready to revise the provisional judgment in light of the new information. From the welter of material, it is necessary to distill three of four sufficiently painful issues, around which one can formulate a number of questions for the main or activating interview.

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The final interview sampling is directed toward two main groups: those who are directly affected by the issue and the experts on the issues. The experts may be pastors, city officials, students, businessmen, mailmen, etc. When interviewing these two groups, one should constantly compare the different perspectives they bring to the problem. Each person should be evaluated in terms of leadership potential and whether he or she is positive, neutral, or negative toward possible action on the problem. Each interview should end with the activating question (i.e. 'curiosity question': Can anything be done?). A minimum response is about 5% to 10% of those interviewed.

Now that one has aroused curiosity, it is necessary to plan a meeting fairly soon before interest fades. After sending out invitations to all those interviewed and any others interested, the meeting must be planned so as to arouse indignation over the results of the interviews. Usually, this does not demand much manipulation, since the issues were 'hot' in the first place; but anger must be channeled into the group-forming stages: the anti-negative and social-creative phases; or else the process will blow-out.

It is imperative of organizers that they be clear about their catalytic role, for most people expect them to assume a father-figure role, and solve their problems for them. These paternalistic expectations have to be disappointed at the same time that one forces the

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group back to its own responsibility for the state it is in. One must shoot down their rationalizations and refuse to do their bidding.

In the first meeting, this usually means that the frustration with the situation will turn into attacks on the organizers, which the organizers in turn must willingly accept (even encourage). In one project near the Opel Works in Ruesselsheim, W. Germany (Dickerbusch), a number of factory-related problems emerged--bedrooms built near the streets, noise at shift changes, no playgrounds, etc.--, which were uncovered by a team from the Gossner Mission. The meeting proceded according to expectation: curiosity became openly expressed anger, which became a massive attack on the organizers. In reply, the team simply told them, that they had only come for a few weeks, and that any action was up to them. They would willingly train them in what to do (influence role); but they would have to do it, since it was their community and their problems. They formed several groups and went to work.

It is desirable to form several project groups at the first meeting in order to increase the possibility of success. If only one project is going, there is a greater risk of a simple win/lose situation; whereas several projects (usually three or four) increases the chances for at least one success experience, and thereby vicarious satisfaction and encouragement for the others.

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The Hauser method is not a key to success by itself, but lays down certain ground rules in a systematic fashion, which bring the participants to an awareness that they can affect the course of events. Thus, the basic similarity to Freire's 'pedagogy of the oppressed'.

Hauser's pedagogy can take place at either of two stages. The organizers can do the groundwork leading up to the first meeting and the formation of the project groups; or, alternatively, an organizer can gather around a group of people to do the original organizing for the meeting. The choice is up to the organizers, and each has its merits.

To do the original spadework oneself is usually faster, assuming the organizers can devote full-time to interviewing, writing up the interviews, distilling the issues, gathering public information, etc. This course was chosen by the Lerchenberg and Dickerbusch groups, since they were operating within a limited time span.

The other alternative was tried in another Mainz suburb, Muenchfeld, and proceeded by stops and starts, though not necessarily due to this particular method. The problem seems to be the pace of life, which allows people only limited time for such activities, unless the issues are painful enough. Housewives seem to be the main resource in middle class suburban organizing, since their time schedules are generally more flexible than their husbands. The church offers a base within the communal context out of which an

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organizing group can operate, providing the pastor is open to community issues and needs.

One problem with this organizing model--as with many others--is the problem of the neutralizer in the group, who consciously tries to subvert the cathartic or anti-negative phase away from socially-creative action into the secure phase. In Muenchfeld, one member of the group constantly fielded various complaints by promising to have the political party to which he belonged (the Christian Democrats) investigate the problems and correct them. In the course of a night we were promised street lighting, a football field, and a playground. From the organizer's perspective, these were all important goals, but not the central ones. Getting "things" is not primary, but establishing a liberating process, whereby a group held in paternalistic regression (in a psychotherapeutic sense of a fixation in a stage of childish immaturity) experiences its maturity through a socially creative, self-determining praxis. The praxis builds ego strength, whereas the accumulation of things and privileges usually reflects childish selfishness. This is an important question in dealing with socially-privileged groups: Is the organizing effort only helping privileged people to get more privileges? From the standpoint of liberation, organizing for its own sake is not justified; but only as it "conscienticizes" persons, i. e. makes people aware of their true condition in a capitalist society, and makes them

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of the condition and needs of all people below them in the class pyramid. Any organizing "successes" which fail to achieve these goals can be counted as failures, for they merely stabilize the system by increasing the satiation of these already affluent groups. (I refer to successes, where a privileged group gains at the expense of an unprivileged group.)

The problem of goals and the neutralizers is especially difficult, since the group is open to anyone in the community, and has no formal constitution or structure. The only agenda is posed by the people who attend the meetings, which may be very diverse. For one woman it might be the lack of public transportation, and for others racial conflict. In the Involvement Corps (Ontario) two persons have effectively blocked any action on the part of the group for a coalition with the "Concerned Citizens", since it threatens their interests; and have attempted to redirect the group toward less controversial problems which have nothing to do with their original goal: "To understand people of different economic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds." (This will be discussed more extensively below.)

Another problem with achieving the goal of conscientizacion is that organizing always proceeds according to concrete short-term projects, while the new and altered consciousness is the indirect result for which one hopes. Nevertheless, the group often gets bogged down in the "things", and loses interest when the short term

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end is achieved (or frustrated).

It is therefore necessary that the organizers exercise their influence role critically, and to observe what roles each member assumes. The neutralizers exploit paternalistic expectations, so that it is often necessary for the organizer to point this out to the group, and to develop strategies for avoiding these persons. In several of the organizing projects mentioned, the first meeting will generate a great deal of heat from the concerned persons, only to have the group lapse into silence at a subsequent meeting with city officials or local politicians. Usually, these latter will co-opt the group program by promising to fulfil the goals themselves. In Muenchfeld, a 25 storey hotel was planned, which aroused the citizenry to protest. Three hundred persons from this residential area showed up at an open meeting at the church for a discussion with the mayor, city planner, and city manager, with Frau Christa Springe from the Gossner Mission serving as moderator. After many angry outbreaks, the mayor gallantly stood behind their protest and claimed to support their views on the hotel. He promised to appoint a committee to study alternative locations; though, at last report, the hotel is going up in Muenchfeld anyway. A similar tactic was used at a public meeting in Ontario, when the mayor simply crossed out a transportation center on the city plan displayed before the audience. He was asked, however, if this meant the transportation center was in fact

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eliminated from the general plan, which he had to deny.

Ultimately, the problem of the neutralizer may mean the group will have to divide and re-form into groups reflecting a consensus of self-interest, since a recognized mutual self-interest is the basis upon which these groups operate. From personal observations of the Ontario Involvement Corps., it has not become clear to me how that group will ever be able to function as long as two particular individuals have not been dealt with. Their presence is intimidating and obstructs action. A free exchange of ideas seems impossible with them there, since they monopolize discussion.

The neutralizing tactic seems to be used for several different reasons. When the group poses a potential threat to established interests, a person representing those interests will come in to neutralize. In this case, the person shows no interest in the group's original purpose, and usually shows up later on when the work has already begun, and a political course has been set.

Another form of neutralizer is the person who merely uses the group as a personal power base. Prestige and other factors are operative here. When these people fail to get acceptance for their goals, they often drop out or play a spoiler role.

In the Lerchenberg activation, the group began with eight housewives with an interest in living conditions and part-time employment. They came to a meeting out of curiosity over the results of the

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interviews, including the interviews with experts, which the organizers hinted might know something about job openings. Since a television station is located in Lerchenberg (Zweite Deutsche Fernsehen), the organizers consulted several persons in the personnel department to determine what jobs might be available.

According to Hauser's method, the first meeting requires that the team report its findings factually, leaving aside interpretation of the facts. A thorough discussion by the team would hinder the group from offering its comments, if all is said and done. Therefore, the organizers confined their presentation to short statements of fact, offering the group common points of indignation and irritation, such as the Esso monopoly on coal oil. This is a contract between the construction firms and Esso to supply the oil for heating, which means that no other firm can supply oil if Esso fails to deliver--which happened in the Berliner Siedlung (Mainz). The residents had to go without heat in winter, which became an issue in other suburbs with the same arrangement. Gradually, the presentation of the job issue, which the women mentioned frequently, was discussed.

Throughout the discussion, the team conscientiously followed the rule that no women should feel personally attacked or directly spoken to, and the mood was conciliatory throughout. The positive was spoken of first, then the problematic areas.

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The team agreed beforehand to withhold the results of the expert interviews until the people asked for it. This decision resulted from the reservation, that the immediate discussion of the expert opinions would not lead to the group process of indignation, on the one hand, and curiosity about action, on the other, which is the presupposition for long-term activity. Thus, they only let it be known later on, that they had made these other interviews.

As the meeting proceeded (on March 11, 1971), the women quickly entered into discussion of the community situation, though contrary to expectation. Instead of negative comments, the people began to relate various success experiences, such as petitioning, a house party in a high-rise apartment, a common undertaking against reduced heat and parking fees. One point of common agreement was the need for better facilities for children, such as playgrounds.

The course of the evening made it evident, that these women were already engaged in the social issues affecting Lerchenberg, but had hitherto failed to develop strong communication among themselves. As a result, the group agreed to meet five days later, in order to discuss several issues which had only been touched upon: improvement of play facilities, the need for a pediatrician, and to invite city officials to their future meetings to discuss living conditions. The more difficult problem of possible employment was postponed.

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The second meeting occurred five days later, at which a city council woman was present. The problem of employment was discussed at this time, including the restrictions placed upon women by men and the family situation. Thus, what began under the discussion catchword 'continuing education' eventually became a discussion about the social and political restraints of role-defined behavior. The women began to see that only they themselves could represent their interests, though no one drew the consequences of actively participating in political councils. The general tone of the meeting was still marked by resignation.

The presence of the city council woman, in this case was positive. In other instances, politicians usually come to these meetings with the intention of monopolizing discussion, making large promises without any substance, and generally intimidating the people into silence. In such circumstances, the organizer should be prepared to speak up factually and forcefully, in order to direct the negative feelings of the group toward these persons. In this instance, however, the city official was sympathetic to the women on the basis of her own experience with family, children, and as a lone woman in a world of men.

During the discussion it became apparent that about a third of the group was not concerned with the issue of professional status, and accepted the role of housewife. It became apparent to the

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organizers that any activation depended on a number of goals, if these persons were to remain involved.

By the second meeting, the organizing team was asked not to come to future meetings. This was not ingratitude, for the group felt it was on its own feet now, and did not need further assistance. Two minor success experiences strengthened their self-confidence: the attendance of the city councilwoman, and a letter to the television station which received a positive reply. The group continued to meet long after the organizers had left, mainly around the problems of professional opportunities, playgrounds, etc.

One of the slogans at the Gossner Mission is the "big love for small steps". It expresses the recognition that change occurs when accumulated forces put unbearable stress on old structures, causing them either to collapse or modify themselves. The 'small steps' in political activity aim at big structural changes over long periods of time; but in the short run, one must be patient. In this case, the small step was to bring together several isolated individuals and enable them to recognize and change their situation. We do not know, however, whether any new structural awareness--say, of the oppression of women--occurred during the four meetings held while the Gossner seminar was in session. The probability that such accomplishments are merely social therapy without long term social-political goals raises questions about organizing middle class people,

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who have in mind an increase of their privileges and not even the procurement of their basic survival needs (which is the starting point for organizing the poor).

The middle class in a world perspective is rich and privileged by relative economic standards. It is the twenty per cent for whom the system works. The other eighty per cent are marginated by that system: there are no other options for "poor Lazarus" but to live in hunger and oppression. The wealth of the middle class includes its wealth of options in life styles, even the option of voluntary poverty. In the case of Lerchenberg, the women were out to improve upon their prerogatives--i. e. a life style which depends upon this unequal distribution of wealth for its maintenance--; and thus, the actions they took cannot be understood as a threat (at least directly) to the system. Claus Offe has noted this problem in a number of citizen initiatives in Germany and America:

> ... Such initiatives are frequently based on the liberal trust, that the state, or rather the community government, will give in, if only the will and needs of the citizens are presented to them with enough pressure.... Not only in this confidence, but also in the concrete priorities of several citizen initiatives, the particular constellation of needs shines forth as of the middle class, self-employed, and intellectual strata: thus, one can assert with a certain degree of accuracy, that communal forms of solidarity and, concomitantly, technical problems of more convenient social life, as well as anti-authoritarian kindergartens, are easily dissociated from the context of political intentions in which they arose, and can be tailored to the specific comfort needs of the urban upper middle class.... In this case, we have to do with a perversion of political citizen initiatives into politically fruitless forms of collective self-help: instead of political organization,

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> there arises a cooperative service organization, for those who can afford it; nothing changes in terms of the politically and institutionally determined conditions of reproduction. ---Therefore, of politically consequential citizen initiatives, we can only speak in those cases, where the danger is avoided that such actions fall back to the level of a spontaneous self-help organization, which only benefits the specific needs of a certain stratum.[13]

In terms of welfare state policy, the citizen initiative is often welcomed as 'an early warning system', which signals conflicts and bottlenecks in the smooth running of the institution. This has been the traditional concern of the Democratic Party in America, and of the Labour and Social Democratic parties in Europe, in that the long term stability of capitalism depends on a certain minimum of reproduction infrastructure (schools, playgrounds, services, etc.) which the private sector cannot profitably supply. Thus, the government assumes this role. Hence, the eagerness of politicians to take over the demands of citizen initiatives as part of their political program.

The fact that the middle class minority is a privileged group on a world scale does not detract from the dependent role they play in the system. They serve it, and benefit accordingly. Yet, the salary one receives--to use one indicator of middle class status--does not eliminate vulnerability: anyone can be fired. In this respect, the middle class shares something in common with the underclasses: subservience. The very top of the social pyramid--at the most, 3%--

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[13]Offe, p. 160.

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can claim to be independent, for they own or control the means of production; and therefore, control the lives of the rest.

The function of the citizen initiative, as seen from the long-range political perspective of the organizer, is to make these privileged groups aware of their own dependency, and to declare solidarity, both in word and deed, with those classes below them. The next citizen initiative to be described attempted--so far, without success--to do just this. The fact that it was a failure does not mean that no lessons can come out of it. It means that community organizing among these privileged groups must be put into radical question, and with it, the role of the church as a putative reconciler.

CAN THERE BE POLITICAL SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE MIDDLE AND LOWER CLASSES?: THE INVOLVEMENT CORPS OF ONTARIO, CALIFORNIA

The term 'reconciliation' is a popular word among theologians, especially since the civil rights struggle began. It has lately been coupled with another term--more secular in connotation--, which conveys a meaning somewhere between self-determination and indifference: 'pluralism'. Moreover, these words have become fashionable in the life of the church, so that many thinking Christians today would define mission as a reconciling activity among conflicting groups, helping each group to express itself authentically.

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The critical problem, however, is to see what the church actually does, when it discovers the implications of its own theology. The following report describes such an attempt to deal with the problem of race conflict in Ontario, Calif. The main intent is not to point a self-righteous finger at the churches involved, but only to raise again, both critically and realistically, the question: Can there be political solidarity between middle and lower classes? This question is posed on a very concrete, practical level of actual commitment to pluralism, rather than a merely verbal commitment. In this respect, the Ontario experience is very instructive.

The lack of understanding between the inner city and the suburban ring became apparent in the 1960's as urban ghettoes exploded in rebellion against their oppression. Older sociological concepts, such as the 'melting pot' theory of American culture upon which the civil rights movement goal of integration was based, were found wanting when applied to non-European minorities, who could not assimilate because of pure physical difference. It soon became apparent--at least to some--that the 'problem of minorities' was not a minority problem at all, but a deep-seated problem of the dominant white culture.[14] It is, as Yann Redalié has written (see above), a

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[14]Cf. Wm. Ryan, Blaming the Victim (New York: Vintage, 1972).

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failure of Americans to appreciate 'otherness'.[15]

Because of this new consciousness, a new term became the vogue: 'pluralism'. To some extent, it meant tolerance of other cultures, the legitimacy of non-white social alternatives, and freedom to be. It has also become an ideological term for white society, in that it justifies indifference to the plight of others and vindicates consumer cultures which are basically parasitic of the poor. To say that all life styles are legitimate is too simplistic and ahistorical, for it obscures oppression and dependency.

Nevertheless, there was at least a crude understanding that something had changed; and in this situation, the All-Nations Foundation of Los Angeles, a United Methodist agency, saw a pressing need to interpret the pluralistic understanding of American history to a white society, which still saw its own standards as normative for all. This entailed a threefold pedagogical progression (as I see it): rupture--consciousness--task.[16]

Rupture, or what Bachelard and Althusser call an 'epistemological break', occurs when a group can no longer explain it adequately--in terms of old time categories. In this case, the

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[15]Cf. Edward T. Hall, The Silent Language (Greenwich, Conn: Fawcett, 1959).

[16]I am indebted to Ignacio Castuera for this view of liberating pedagogy.

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melting pot theory does not explain the continuing reality of unassimilated groups, nor does it take account of oppression as a factor in social divisions.

When a group ruptures with older concepts and ideologies, it becomes open to a true consciousness of the social realities; it becomes aware of its true situation. This does not occur automatically, however, for the destruction of old myths may only lead to a re-mythologization in more 'up-to-date', chic vocabularies, which again mask history. Much so-called social criticism is on this level, including some theological jargon. A true consciousness must include an accurate understanding of the economic infrastructure and its relation to the juristic, political, and ideological superstructures.

The task proceeds from the new consciousness of one's situation. One weighs different strategies and options to achieve the long term goal: in this case, the goal of a truly pluralistic America. These three stages are diachronic, and integral to each other for a truly liberating praxis.

The question one must put to the organizing model of the All-Nations Foundation is whether it does any of these three tasks sufficiently, or whether it writes certain sociological conclusions into the method, which in turn limit the strategies or the issues with which the team is prepared to deal. Or again, maybe the team should limit its organizing efforts while in fact it does not.

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Excursus. When I first met the team at a promotional luncheon, I posed the following question: Would you be prepared to organize a group to keep minorities out of a community, if the task force felt that the influx of different races into the neighborhood was their painful issue? The question confused them somewhat, because they had operated on the assumption that ultimate conflicts do not exist, and apparent conflicts arise from misunderstanding. Also, the constituency of the ANF team has been exclusively the United Methodist churches, upon which one can rely for at least a minimum of humanistic values. However, another client group might really want to start a white citizens council. In this instance, the willingness of the organizing team to let the task force select the issue itself becomes an obstacle to true pluralism. The positivistic assumption that one can proceed in a value-vacuum is as pernicious in organizing as it is in science.

To some extent, the question was a curve ball, since the ANF method presupposes democracy; though the team was not too clear on its own role when democracy conflicts with self-interest. Nevertheless, it points up an unrecognized dilemma in the exposure/reflection/action model: we assume too much about where people are at in their development of social values. In a Protestant religious tradition, such as Methodism, this is especially problematic, for much of our ethics is basically individualistic and unconcerned with the social question (read the letters of laypersons to the editor of "Newspulse" on social issues). Thus, the rupture is not just a new awareness of 'facts', but a transvaluation of values. As Saul Alinsky emphasized over and over, one should only organize groups which abide by democratic values.

The ANF Involvement Corps model must be given credit for its democratic presuppositions, its involvement of the group in

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selecting the issue, and its recognition of the role that self-interest plays in the organizing process. These factors are central to other methods of organization--Hauser, Freire, Alinsky, etc.--, though they may differ markedly in social analysis.

The Involvement Corps concept rests on four assumptions:

1) A return to democratic principles is essential for healthy citizen involvement....

2) Individuals and institutions can anticipate and welcome change rather than fear it....

3) One has to experience the moments of involvement before an understanding of democracy can take place....

4) A sense of dignity and self-worth comes with sharing in the creative process--sharing with God in new creation.... We seek to unite young and old, the establishment and the alienated, the ultra-conservative and the radical into a community that recognizes the worth, dignity and rights of all amid their diversities....[17]

The last premise has been quoted more extensively than the others, because it is central to the ANF understanding of social conflict; i.e., that ultimately it does not exist. Either-or, win-lose

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[17]Darwin Wagner and David Harshman, "All Nations Foundation Involvement Corps" (Los Angeles: ANF, 1972), pp. 6-7.

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situations are rare or non-existent, while the issue resolution process allows everyone to win. To put it in terms of game theory, there are only 'non-zero sum games', rather than 'zero-sum' games. Social harmony is presupposed here, rather than hard racial and class struggle for the distribution of wealth, rights, options, education, etc. Nevertheless, in the social sphere the win/lose game is more the rule than the non-zero sum game, though the ANF team is loath to see this. It is necessary to ask whether this in any way affects their view of pluralism as a real possibility for American society.

The ANF team conceives their work in three foci: 1) the organizing of suburban communities into Involvement Corps groups to deal with painful issues in their own neighborhood; 2) to develop a support network among these various communities to share experiences and strategies; and 3) after forty communities have been recruited and organized, to pair each suburban community with an inner-city group to deal with an issue which is mutually painful (e.g. welfare). So far (summer, 1973), the ANF team is still at the first two stages. For an answer to the question posed at the beginning of this section, the third stage will undoubtedly be the most interesting and conclusive, since these will be alliances or coalitions between the rich (relatively speaking) and the poor. Ontario's experience, however, gives us some premonition of what to expect at this third stage.

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Guy Rammenzweig and I became observers with the ANF team at their I.C. project in Ontario, where we were in attendance from January through June, 1973, and were able to observe certain critical phases of the process, even though we did not begin at the inception nor leave at the end.

The first step in the process, community engagement, had already occurred in October, 1972. This constitutes initiation into the community, for the team is invited by a group in the community to offer its services for a fee. This is their mandate or 'license to operate', which any outside agent needs in order to obtain legitimacy in the community. At this stage, the task force or 'original organizing group' (OOG) gathers community people to meet with the team, obtains various information, takes the team on a car tour (each member of the ANF team goes in a separate car) of the area, sets up a meeting calendar, and discusses community problems.

Invariably, middle class people will talk about the problems of other people, rather than their problems with other people. Thus, in the second stage, the identification of community issues, the organizers must be on guard against various defense mechanisms: denial of pain, rationalization, resignation, etc. The group must name issues which are personally painful, rather than the problems of others. This second meeting should also have input from a cross-section of the community, so that the number of possible issues is

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increased.

When a list of issues is written down, the next step is the selection of the issue to be acted upon. This must be the most painful issue; and selected solely on that basis, not whether or not it can be 'realistically' dealt with. The organizing team must carefully refrain from offering advice or in any way biasing the selection process, for if it is not their issue they will lose interest in it. Furthermore, the group still suspects a hidden agenda on the part of the ANF team, and will often try to foist responsibility for the group onto them, rather than taking ownership themselves. The organizers must encourage participation and identify possible group leaders (natural leaders) who can galvanize the group for action.

Our entrance into the process was somewhere between the second and third steps. Various issues had already been discussed, such as the pollution of the water by the manure used on the orange orchards, lack of public transportation, school issues, etc. The barrio seemed to hover in their minds as a real nodal point of community conflict, but no one seemed to know anyone there personally, nor did anyone extend an invitation to come to the I.C. meetings. A Chicano cultural center in south Ontario, known as 'Mexican city hall', was supposedly a hotbed of revolution against the establishment, but no one knew much about it. The local Catholic priest, Father Guillen, was also known and highly respected as the central power in

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the barrio. He had been instrumental in the formation of the 'Concerned Citizens', an organization of residents from south Ontario, who were fighting the rezoning of the barrio for industrial land use and the expansion of the airport. In effect, the realization of these two objectives in the General Plan would mean the removal of 10,000 people from their homes, and no possiblity of relocation within Ontario (since H.U.D. funds for low cost housing were frozen, and no plans were made in the General Plan for relocation). The Involvement Corps knew nothing of this situation, since the two churches involved were both located in north Ontario, which was not directly affected by the airport expansion issue, at least at present.

There was no common agreement on the issue that was finally selected: "The need for understanding among people of different economic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds in Ontario. (People understanding people.)" One woman even did everything she could to defeat this issue, both for covert and overt reasons, and finally left the group (at least for several weeks, partly for an extended vacation). Once it got around that the I.C. was talking about controversial subjects--racism, airport expansion, 'tax evasion' (non-payment) by the 'Big O' (Ontario Motor Speedway)--, members of the establishment began to attend meetings. This had both positive and negative consequences, for it was a direct access to information; but one person from the board of directors of the Big O also came to neutralize the

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group in any effort to resolve 'their issue'.

This was the background for a confrontation of the I.C. with the Concerned Citizens at the third meeting which Guy and I attended. A week prior to it, we visited Father Guillen to discuss the issues in Ontario from his perspective and invited him and other members of the Concerned Citizens to come to the next I.C. meeting. What followed was a heated debate between Father Guillen and his group and the Big O executive, which brought out the information given above. Many of the I.C. members were both surprised and shocked by what they were learning; and as a result, committed themselves to study the issue further and to have further meetings with the Concerned Citizens representatives involved.

The critical problem at this stage for the I.C. group was to bring its own identity into line with its chosen issue. In other words, it could not deal with diversity as long as it did not diversify itself. Theoretically, this should have been part of the third step--widening the base of the group--but the group only tended to bring in persons who were most like themselves: executives, the mayor and some councilmen, and other white people, mainly from north Ontario. There was one Chicano in the group, who belonged to one of the churches, was a community relations advisor for the school board, and lived in the middle class area. The I.C. looked upon him as their expert on the Mexicans; but during the confrontation between the Big O

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executive and Father Guillen, he was visibly nervous and remained out of the discussion until the very end. At that time, he attempted to divert discussion away from the General plan and airport expansion, which he vehemently asserted to be faits accomplis, toward the master plan and the overall development of the community. From what we observed, we inferred that the presence of the Concerned Citizens threatened his reputed knowledge among the whites and also his role in community relations. It did create a contact between him and the Concerned Citizens, which evidently became a liaison.

From this point on, representatives from the Concerned Citizens came to I.C. meetings to develop a coalition with north Ontario. Yet, the response of the I.C. was less than enthusiastic. As Guy Rammenzweig wryly observed, the Involvement Corps was ready to shake hands with other races, but only with gloves on. Members from the I.C. did show up at the public hearing on the General Plan held in south Ontario, which in fact merely presented the alternatives that had already been decided on by the City Council (which had appointed itself as the redevelopment commission with an additional salary). The meeting only gave the appearance of citizen participation in the decision-making process. During the meeting, I sat next to the assistant superintendent of schools, who indicated to me that though the Concerned Citizens were morally right, there was little they could do to stop the passage of the General Plan and the

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rezoning.

It became clear over the course of several meetings that an ambiguous attitude was felt toward the City Council. On the one hand, the I. C. members were in many cases in close professional and personal contact with the mayor and two or more other councilmen. This meant that they had influence there, but too, that they were in some measure committed to Council policies and the General Plan. In other words, they had opened their eyes to the fact, that their friends--the city fathers--were the direct cause of 'racial' conflict in Ontario. As has been said, politics precedes planning, rather than planning politics. This is a win/lose situation where individual Council members stood to earn a great deal of money if the plan went through, and 10, 000 people stood to lose their homes. On the other hand, the I. C. also felt that the town was run from the outside; that outside interests such as the L. A. Airport Commission, the owners of the Big O (in Chicago), and outside real estate interests ran the community; and that individuals in city government only came to Ontario to bleed its wealth and then retire to Newport Beach, or other resorts.

It gradually became evident the vested interests some I. C. members had in the powers that be. The minister whose son was the assistant city planner; the Big O executive who supported business in general; the woman (now back from her vacation) who had been on the

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Ontario Airport Commission and supported expansion; these were the dominant voices in the I. C. group, and they effectively blocked any real commitment to the Concerned Citizens and their goals.

Others in the group who were honestly committed to dealing with the issue of racism never got beyond an abstract concern for minorities to the hard political realities. The general assumption that 'lack of understanding' was the real problem was proved false as the Involvement Corps members came to an understanding of the real conflict situation. Now, they really could say they understood the problem. But to do something about it they would have to declare for one side or the other: either the Concerned Citizens or the City Council majority. There was no middle or neutral way.

Yet neutrality is what they tried. They sent a letter to the City Council asking that the Concerned Citizens be represented in an ex officio capacity on the planning commission, and that they be the community participant committee on the proposed H. U. D. study with sufficient funds to hire their own planning experts. The letter was filed away by the City Council.

As the I. C. began to realize the nature of the conflict and the demands it made upon them, they increasingly resorted to diverting tactics. Other issues were brought up again--transportation, water, etc.--and general dislike for the Concerned Citizens was evident and sometimes expressed. This was not said openly to the

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Concerned Citizens, but came out at the meeting of the original organizing group of the Involvement Corps.

At this meeting, which came together ostensibly to discuss the possibility of a town hall meeting of all persons and groups in Ontario about the future of the community, it was evident from the outset that nothing much was going to happen. The Big O executive and the former City Councilwoman were both present and dominating discussion. Other issues were discussed. The organizers finally asked what happened to the town hall idea, which led to a deeper discussion of the relation of the I. C. and Concerned Citizens (who were not present). At this point it became apparent that the group was divided between those who supported the General Plan and those who wanted to give at least moral support to the Concerned Citizens.

It was this latter group that felt the 'crunch' most intensely, for during the course of issue selection and contact with people from south Ontario, they became aware of the conflict between their ideals of racial harmony and the realities of conflict perpetrated by their friends at city hall. Because they were unwilling to express the conflict in the group--which in effect meant splitting the group--they could not make a concrete, 'here I stand' commitment to the Concerned Citizens. The ethos of the middle class--'getting along', 'not rocking the boat', 'no causes'--prevailed.

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At the previous meeting, I suggested that taking minutes would help to create continuity in the group process, since various persons appeared sporadically. I brought the subject up again at this meeting, and I was asked to do it. Of course, this was a good indication of where the group (after eight months) was at: expecting someone else to do something for them instead of taking responsibility for it themselves. I assumed the task, however, in order to offer some editorial questions (which I cleared with the organizers before sending them to the group). They were quite blunt:

1) Is there continuity in the group, both from the standpoint of individual attendance and the time span between meetings? How can more continuity be established (minutes, etc.)?

2) What are the causes for declining interest of I. C. members in the basic issue: "The need for understanding among people of different economic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds in Ontario. (People understanding people)"?

3) Will the transportation issue be as pressing a concern to "people of different economic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds" as the question of the airport and rezoning? If not, how is it justified in terms of the basic issue? Is not the transportation issue mainly a concern of the Anglo's?

4) Are some persons in the group playing a neutralizing role by effectively blocking any concrete action in accord with the basic issue

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(dominating discussion, postponing action into the indefinite future, directing action toward side issues like transportation, mass media study, water pollution, etc.) which the group has selected as its reason for being?

5) How will the lack of concrete commitment and action be perceived by the Concerned Citizens and other minorities? As one more example of the discrepancy between the words and deeds of white people?

The minister had promised to print up the minutes, but nothing came in the mail. At the following meeting, he finally read the minutes when one of the ANF team asked him to do so, but was even more reluctant to read the questions. The I.C. group (which was again meeting alone) was visibly nervous at this confrontation. Some took it personally, though they preserved appearances.

This was the last meeting to occur before summer, and it has not met since (at this writing, Sept. 1973). The associate minister informs us that there is some question whether the team will be kept on. None of the ministers or members is heavily committed to resolving their painful issue, and no real leadership has developed out of the group (except from those who would like to see the group either disband or deal with non-controversial issues which will benefit them personally in a material way).

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Overall, I judge this instance of the ANF issue resolution process a failure. It never got beyond 'sandbox politics' to truly humanizing, politically partisan advocacy for the oppressed. This may have been a guaranteed result of an organizing method which tries to involve everyone. To "unite young and old, the establishment and the alienated, the ultra conservative and the radical" may be a long term utopian goal (I have nothing against utopian alternatives), but in the short run it obscures real differences of interest which really do stand in opposition and conflict. Call this 'class struggle' or whatever, these conflicts are real and not imaginary. Merely to assume that in the end we can achieve harmony in every conflict situation is idealistic, and only obscures the hard realities. The ideology of social harmony and its terminological variants--'dialogue', 'understanding', 'trust', etc.--must be clarified or exposed in the course of an advocate initiative, so that the oppressed groups (and for that matter, potential middle class allies) are aware of their real situation, the real power relations in the society, rather than basing their actions on a 'false consciousness' of the situation. Only then do people really know what they are committing themselves to, what it will cost them personally, and what they will get in return.

Like "cheap grace", Christians must expose and reject cheap reconciliation as a Christian heresy (or as sub-Christian). This kind of 'reconciliation' brings no cross with it, no suffering,

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and ultimately no change. Reconciliation costs; you pay for what you get.[18]

THE POLITICS OF RECONCILIATION

The 'neutralist approach' to urban-industrial mission shares with the'reform-pedagogical' approach to community work a fundamental assumption about social change: namely, that real change can come about, while preserving "the basic power relationships as they are" (Scott Paradise above). The advocate analysis, on the contrary, maintains that antagonistic contradications do exist, and cannot be reduced to psychological predispositions of the different parties. The purely subjective approach to conflict manifests itself in subtle form, when community organizers attempt to "unite young and old, the establishment and the alienated, the ultra-conservative and the radical" without analyzing the material issues between them. To realize "a community that recognizes the worth, dignity and rights of

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[18]I must disagree with Prof. Howard Clinebell, who from a group dynamics perspective, felt that it was wrong to invite the Concerned Citizens to the I.C. meeting, since by doing so they (the Concerned Citizens) constituted a threatening or 'invading' presence. Politically, there might have been more strategic approaches, but the conflict was structurally built in and not just a psychological problem of invasion. What counselors often avoid with terms like 'invasion', middle class people just call 'bad manners'; in either case, the reality is avoided, while good form is preserved. Any confrontation is threatening and brings out guilt.

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all amid their diversities" (ANF) is a legitimate long range goal, but idealistic in such an abstract, apolitical statement. Truly humanizing activity is readily partisan for the rights of the oppressed, which have been denied them by the oppressor. One cannot unite oppressor and oppressed unless the relationship of oppression is destroyed. The most that one can achieve under such circumstances is conflict-reduction, i. e. the reduction of manifest conflicts to latent conflicts; and therefore, system-integration, rather than critical distance to the society.[19] In this regard, Rev. Guy Bottinelli makes the following observations on the implications of class cooperation:

> ... Secondly, there is the attitude of those who would like to see class co-operation. They are often themselves managers and managing directors. It is my responsibility to remind them that before co-operating one must know where one stands; and before talking one must become articulate. We must dare to go right back to this stage. This is as true of technicians and employers as it is of workers--something we tend to forget. Most of the time members of a society talk for mutual reassurance. A whole range of trade union, managerial and religious publications is designed merely to build up the morale of the troops, and has no power of communication. And since this kind of communication is one of the fundamental characteristics of the Gospel, we must work to achieve it among individuals and groups. If some kind of class co-operation follows, that is the affair of those concerned. My own analysis inclines me rather to believe that a sustained communication will result in laying bare the deep

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[19] In a discussion with a German economist on the goals of foreign aid, he stated that the most one could expect from it is to make the oppression a little more bearable. This is really too little! Nevertheless, the same attitude seems to prevail in cases we have discussed.

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structural roots of social conflict.[20]

This is the crux of the issue. Real communication, real understanding, cannot assume the outcome of social action before the action takes place. To assume social harmony in all circumstances limits one's options, rather than broadening them. To accept the reality of conflict does not limit one's options--say, to confrontation--but gives one a realistic understanding of the situation upon which to strategize. In the case of the Involvement Corps, this might mean re-forming the group to exclude all those who are not willing to act on the issue (although there is a danger here of setting up a 'party line').

This necessarily involves the organizer or 'influence leader' in a manipulative role (albeit for a putatively positive purpose), since the Rogerian method of 'non-directive listening' is inadequate for motivating groups to act. (It is hardly even liberating communication, since the person who talks is always more vulnerable than the one who listens and who is therefore in a 'one-up' position.) Perhaps 'manipulative' has too many negative connotations to be serviceable, but at least it conveys important aspects of the influence role: confronting a group with the true situation in which it finds itself, and

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[20]Guy Bottinelli, "Serving in Industry", The French Protestant Industrial Mission, Nos. 43-44 (summer 1970), p. 2.

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interpreting the situation to them. The leadership role is not just passive listening (although 'hearing' people is absolutely essential), but activity and communication of oneself.

In the next chapter, we will conclude with a discussion of the relation of social theory and theology. This is quite important, since very few, either within the church or without, expect a liberating praxis from Christians. We tend to 'fiddle with scriptures' in order to justify what seems opportune, instead of letting either the situation or the Biblical paradigms speak to us. As Bottinelli writes:

> André Dumas rightly reminds us to distinguish between faith (the invitations and promises on which the Bible expands) and ideologies (those necessary methods of interpretation and historical transformation about which the Bible has almost nothing to say). But nonetheless we cannot play off one ideology against another. One of the primary tasks of the Church today is the patient critical analysis of ideologies.[21]

This kind of analysis may be the best contribution that Christians can make to the social and political sphere today.

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[21] Ibid., p. 2.

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CHAPTER III

THEOLOGY, CHURCH, AND ACTION

The technique of community development, which was used in the two activations described here, fails to answer two kinds of questions. It does not inquire about the role of the group in the larger society. Thus, it accepts the general framework of the society, and maneuvers within it. This allows government agencies and foundations to give money for community development projects, which, if they succeed, only benefit a small minority (such as Operation Headstart); and, if they fail, allow them to claim that the causes lie elsewhere (e.g., innate inferiority, the latest argument in the 'compensatory education' debate). In any case, the structural inequality in the society is rarely questioned, and those who have set up such projects are usually accused of becoming 'political'. This has been called 'dynamic conservatism'.

The other kind of questions which Christians raise are theological in nature. In the context of the church, social work is not an end in itself, but a way of raising the issue of identity with those involved. Christians begin with the question of discipleship as the crucial issue for all involvement in the world, whether it be social action, counseling, management, or other forms of technique. Thus, the existence of a technique alone does not justify its use in the

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church, but only in the light of a theology of discipleship does it become appropriate or inappropriate. This is especially true of social work, which in its professional forms is an overt kind of social control, professional status-seeking, and, often, psychological manipulation, which, as such, has little to do with Christian servanthood and the 'corporal works of mercy'. To raise the issue of goals in light of the gospel is to exercise critical caution toward all merely technical means, and to insure that means do not become ends in themselves.

It was shown above that the urban-industrial mission concept of the Gossner Mission is partisan to the extent that it gives vicarious representation to the unprivileged. Furthermore, it was maintained that this vicarious function is part of the total sense of mission, which gives the church its identity and makes it necessarily 'one-sided'. It remains to be seen how discipleship involves a concern for society, and not just the immediate needs of individuals. This has never proved an easy task, however, primarily because the method of procedure has not been clarified.

To see why Christians take a political stand--either capitalist or socialist--demands a legitimation analysis in terms of Christian values. Frank Vanderhoff presents three ways in which Christians have justified their political involvements:[1]

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[1]Frank Vanderhoff, "The Theology of Liberation", a lecture

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1. One begins with certain Christian values and jumps directly from there to political commitment and praxis;

2. One begins with certain Christian ideals--"love", etc. --, does an objective analysis of society, and then makes a political commitment in order to live up to the Christian ideals (which is a 'feedback' to the original starting point);

3. The third position begins with Christian values; the objective or scientific analysis of society then follows. Commitment to a political struggle follows that, which is no longer a commitment to Christian ideals as such, but to concrete justice in the situation. There is no reference back to the starting point; for one is not involved because one is a Christian, but because one is a human being interested in the liberation of other human beings. In this last case, one accepts the reality of the situation, and asks what it means to be a Christian in it; rather than starting from the fact that one is a Christian, and then concluding that one must get involved.

There is a similarity between the view of Vanderhoff and that of Reinhold Niebuhr in this respect, even though their views of historical outcomes might be less in agreement; for in both cases there is a distrust of a naive Christian love ethic applied to society directly and without the mediation of an accurate social analysis. Moreover, in

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delivered at the School of Theology at Claremont, July 31, 1973.

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both instances, the distinction between Christian love and social justice are held to be distinct and in tension. Justice is a human work, which can be inspired by Christian love or humanistic motivation. In any case, one should not insinuate covert Christian motivation to humanists, who seek justice for an oppressed people simply for its own sake. There are distinctly Christian motives for seeking justice, but the concrete acts themselves can be done for a variety of motives. As a friend has said, there are specifically Christian motives, but not specifically Christian deeds.

Many Christians, of course, will feel uneasy with this distinction; not least of all, Vanderhoff himself, who feels compelled to identify the 'Kingdom of God' with a socialist utopia (something which other theologians of liberation, e.g. Gustavo Gutierrez, do not do). To a large extent, this is a problem of method in theology and ethics, which Dr. Thomas Ulrich has differentiated into three distinct categories. Though each method or model is currently used in the industrial ministry of the German Evangelical Church, they are equally applicable to any ministry.[2]

MODEL A: The first model is apodictic in character, and begins

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[2]Thomas Ulrich, "Eindruecke von der Arbeit des Amtes fuer Industrie und Socialarbeit der EKHN" (unpublished paper, Gossner, Mainz, Spring 1971).

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with fixed premises from which it deduces certain social consequences. Since these premises--e. g., God demands obedience, justice, etc.--are irreducible and arbitrary, they cannot be rationally questioned or criticized, but must be accepted on faith. They represent eternal values, fixed points of ethical reference, etc., which are absolutely binding on one's life. After analysis of the actual situation, one can derive certain appropriate actions.

Model A appears problematic from several points of view:

1) There is only a one-way path from faith to action, and therefore the theological premises, upon which action is based, do not allow of modification.

2) The theological premises remain a private confession, a personal starting point, a biographical statement, rather than a material necessity which is dictated by the social situation. Others can arrive at similar social consequences from different premises, thus obviating the idea that these actions are peculiarly 'Christian'.

3) Since the premises are absolute, and thus strictly formal (without material content), consequences for action can only be determined through an analysis of the situation. The real decisions, therefore, are made at this level, and the premises become irrelevant.

4) The lack of a critical historical feedback on faith means that this model has no relevance for church renewal, or for church structures which respond to social challenges.

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MODEL B: This model has become more popular recently with the writings of Juergen Moltmann, Harvey Cox, and others. It tends toward an inductive model, in that one proceeds from social analysis and intended action, rather than religious values. Faith and action are identified as 'Kingdom of God work' ('Reich Gottes Arbeit'--L. Ragaz). These theologians usually identify the Kingdom of God functionally with social-revolutionary utopias (following Ernst Bloch), and thus there is a direct identification of theological and social phenomena. God is viewed as the power of revolution; Jesus' presence is found in co-humanity with those who suffer, and in secular social movements, such as Marxism, which seek to abolish man's alienation. It was on this basis, that Tillich was able to understand Marxism directly as a religious movement.

Ulrich criticizes this model on two points:

1) The activity of Christ in society defined as the presence of the Kingdom of God presupposes general ontological, religious, and historical-philosophical theories as the necessary basis upon which social action is justified. Consequently, one does a good work because of the Kingdom of God, not because the situation is obviously bad and needs to be corrected. The subordination of the contemporary historical situation to abstract religious principles raises the same questions posed to model A, not to mention the problem of verification. Methodologically, Moltmann, Cox, and others of this position,

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remain theologically conservative in spite of their revolutionary demands.

2) The insinuation of religious motivation in movements with a secular self-understanding culminates in a form of "religious imperialism", which ignores the antagonism and protests of these movements to religion.

MODEL C: Both models A and B proceed, directly or indirectly, from the material values of theology, and then determine action. This last model rejects this approach, and proceeds rather from a phenomenological analysis of man as an acting, communicating, socially-enmeshed being. This is not a specifically Christian analysis, and only contains Christian elements from an acquaintance with Christian history. (Barth's charge that Heidegger is a covert Lutheran by no means makes his analysis specifically Christian.) The premises of model C are: autonomy of the subject, the world understood as history, constitution of human beings through (social) labor; all of which are insights arising out of, and presupposing, experiences of successful social praxis, for which the analysis gives theoretical justification.

Thus, the comprehensive frame of reference is the practical activity of humanity--Lebenspraxis--, which is the presupposition for theological reflection, rather than religious postulates. The result

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is a humanistic anthropology, which views human autonomy over against an objective world in which it expresses itself, an autonomy which seeks to transform the world from an alienating to a non-alienating praxis.

The ethical sequence that follows from this anthropology begins with the practical activity of persons, and proceeds to ethical demands based on that activity; whereas, the first two models began with ethical demands, which must then be translated from theory into praxis. Instead of beginning with ethical and theological demands, the ethic of social responsibility presupposes that persons already act in history with autonomy--at least to some extent--; and this practical activity becomes the basis upon which ethical demands are consistently extended to the totality of society, in the sense of democratizing all spheres of life and all social structures. The positions of freedom which have already been achieved become the basis for a continuing activity of liberation, which aims at the total (i.e., utopian) democratization of all spheres of life.

This third model does not claim any identity between the utopian goal and the Kingdom of God, as set forth in the second model, and therefore, one is not forced to postulate the Kingdom as an unattainable goal. The religious significance of this third model is its close parallel to the law/gospel polarity in Paul, in that a responsible social praxis is understood as law for which faith is the necessary

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counterpoint, the power to live a praxis of reconciliation in spite of the antagonisms and contradictions in which responsible action is caught. The symbol of this reconciliation is the cross, which is the sign of hope for beings enmeshed in objective social processes (law). Faith, grace, gospel presuppose the law, and cannot precede it (as in the theology of Karl Barth).

In contrast to the other models, it is not the values and goals which are theologically qualified, but the life process itself which fosters these values and grasps the resistent reality. It is this process of mediation between subject and object, which the Kingdom qualifies.

This analysis puts the question of Christian involvement in politics in a different light. To return to Vanderhoff's question: What does it mean for me to be a Christian in this reality? Darroll Bryant's answer to that question is unequivocal:

> Within a world shaped by poverty, theology becomes a way of being-in-the-world. It is life taking shape within the crucible of yesterday and tomorrow. It is life which struggles against oppression and for liberation. It is life which rejects the inhumanity of the present time and searches for humanity-in-community. It is life in a communion which leads to the sharing of the bread of the world. It is life responsive to that Power which overthrows and heals, that Future which judges the present and keeps tomorrow open.[3]

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[3]Darroll Bryant, A World Broken by Unshared Bread (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1970), p. 72.

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THE CHURCH AS A DISCIPLE COMMUNITY

The call to become a disciple of Jesus can never be heard from a neutral or uncommitted position, but presupposes that an individual wants to live his or her life responsibly. As in other areas, discipleship demands a price, which is paid through total commitment. Jesus' question to Peter, "But who do you say that I am?" (Matt. 16:15) is not just a simple question about the identity of Jesus, but at the same time, a question about the identity of Peter. Peter is caught out in the immediately ensuing interchange (Matt. 16:23) because he did not understand, that to identify Jesus without committing oneself to the Jesus-action is demonic. This is in accord with the Matthean concept of Jesus as the bringer of a better righteousness, which runs throughout this gospel. While Jesus accepts the framework of Jewish law in the first gospel, his confrontations with the Pharisees start from points of law and end with the price to be paid. Thus, in Matthew 9:13, Jesus ends the discussion with the exhortation: "Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (RSV) (Such differences of interpretation probably had the rabbinic debates of Shimmei and Hillel in the background, but the problem of the uniqueness of Jesus is not at stake here.) In other words, mercy is a much bigger --even qualitatively different--price than the Pharisees were willing

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to pay.

Nor can one actually pay the price, for as Paul saw, the effect of this radicalization of the law was to increase one's own deficiency in fulfilling its prescriptions. The Pharisees, for all of their admirable earnestness, did not see the so-called 'first use of the law' (Luther): to convict us of sin. It is precisely the frustration of personal claims to right living (in terms of the law) that sets the stage or creates the right context to hear the words of Jesus: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:15) The work of the law is not 'righteousness', but self-criticism.

On the other hand, one cannot go through a process of self-criticism unless one is free, which already means living in the gospel. The situation seems somewhat circular; except that the gospel is not another demand upon one's life (which is the way the law functions), but the divine YES over our lives in spite of failure. To be free is to accept the YES, rather than trying to become affirmed through one's own efforts.

Of course, it was this reversal of the 'indicative' and the 'imperative' in the message of Jesus and Paul, which put them in such hot conflict with the Pharisees (of whom they were probably both a part). To say that one already is acceptable in spite of failure to obey the demands of the law seems to subvert the authority of law.

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The Pharisees clung to the usual view: 'imperative' (obedience to the law) comes before the 'indicative' (righteousness); while the disciples of Jesus, such as Paul, could say that...'There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.' (Rom. 8:1)

This view of law and gospel does not undercut the authority of law and obedience, but in effect radicalizes it; for law becomes the bare minimum for the disciple, and lays upon the disciple freely chosen responsibilities. The hypocrisy involved in Phariseeism is overcome, for one no longer seeks a way around the demands of the law. To repeat the words of Jesus: "Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice'. For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (Matt. 9:13)

It is in light of this new relationship to God, that Jesus can say the words: "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men." (Mark 1:17) This in no way means that the disciples have gotten the message, especially in Mark.[4] Having all the answers is not the meaning of discipleship, but to live in hope. As Helmut Gollwitzer has so marvelously pointed out:

> ... There is an overhasty misuse of the answer, which the Christian message implies for human problems. This occurs when the message is applied as if it were a pat and ready answer,

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[4]Cf. Samuel Sandmel, "Prolegomena to a Commentary on Mark", in New Testament Issues (London: SCM, 1970).

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> lying ready to our hand, an answer which stifles inquiry. The message is in reality not in our possession, it is rather the promise of an answer, which actually makes the man who hears it in faith capable of bearing the burden of questions without answering them. That is what Reinhold Schneider means in one of his late memoranda, which also uses the comparison dealt with here. "Or do we perhaps believe that there are aspects of the world to which Christianity has no answer? That is the one thing that must not happen. And it is better to die with a burning question on one's heart than with a not quite honest faith."[5]

This is precisely the situation in which Christians have always been. Paul followed his Damascus road experience with several years reflection in the Arabian desert to work out his salvation with fear and trembling. While one can claim to have had an experience of grace, which was decisive for one's faith, it is in trying to universalize one's new perspective that one meets the problems of the world. For those problems there are no generally applicable Christian ethical principles, but only ethical considerations. Jesus answers honest ethical queries with concrete stories (e.g., the parable of the good Samaritan) or concrete advice to personal dilemmas (the problem of the rich young ruler), which in effect leave us in the same fix as the first century followers of Jesus. Modern suburban man has as little idea what to do with the rich young ruler confrontation as the ruler did himself.

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[5]Helmut Gollwitzer, The Christian Faith and the Marxist Criticism of Religion (Edinburgh: St. Andrew Press, 1970), p. 21.

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So while the Bible and church history do not provide us with a system of ethics, they do provide us with a history of ethical questions and the answers given thereto in concrete instances. Whether these questions are the same as ours and the answers relevant to us remains for us to judge.

On a whole, the answer of the early church to ethical questions was concrete and pragmatic--an Interimsethik (A. Schweitzer)--, which included borrowings from Stoicism, the so-called Haustafeln, as well as Jewish law. It is in this light, that Paul's understanding of the Roman state is to be understood, and not as a carefully worked out theory of state power or church-state relations, which is comprehensively and directly applicable today. Moreover, the issues with which the early church had to do were primarily questions of conduct within the congregations, conflicts over authority within the Christian communities, church polity, the problems of incipient heresy (Judaizers, gnostic Christians), etc. While we do not draw from this a false conclusion about the irrelevancy of the New Testament for the 'social question', we must recognize the horizon of these writers was conditioned by the 'Naherwartung', the imminent end of history, in which the Son of Man would judge the quick and the dead. Scholars like Schweitzer and Johannes Weiss have made this absolutely plain and unavoidable for all subsequent scholarship: that moderns do not live within the same historical frame of reference.

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Consequently, modern scholarship has also had to deal with a closely related problem, which was developed in christology by Martin Kaehler. Since scholars could not get behind the Jesus of the gospels, which was a product of the post-Easter community, a sort of christological schizophrenia developed between the 'historical Jesus' (Jesus 'as he really was') and the resurrected Christ; the Christ of Christian doctrine. Apart from the gospels and the other New Testament writings, there are but scant references of historical value to the picture of Jesus. The gospels as products of the community of faith had no interest in Jesus as an historical figure; and modern scholarship has virtually conceded ever writing a biography of Jesus. At the most, one is able to assert probabilities about the authentic or inauthentic sayings of Jesus (which some scholars say relate primarily to the oppressed) on the basis of form criticism.

The effect of modern historical-critical research into the Bible has been overwhelmingly negative in its assessment of traditional christological theories, since many of the affirmations about Christ fit neither the presuppositions of historical research nor of modern philosophy. One response to this situation is to do christology 'from above' (Gerhard Sauter), which makes faith dependent solely upon a leap of faith. This is problematic, however, in that no critical questions can be raised against it; and no guarantee therefore exists, that one is not reading one's own anthropology into Christ, rather

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than finding what is there.

While the church can never justify pursuing knowledge of the historical Jesus simply for its own sake (because, like the early church, it too is a community of faith), commitment to Jesus Christ cannot escape the relativities of historical criticism and discovery. Consequently, the church must do christology 'from below' (Sauter), which will attempt to discern what early Christians saw in Jesus, causing them to declare him lord. As John Vincent has said, the question of early Christians was: What kind of God could sustain this man? The early Christians held that only the God of this man (the revelation of God through his words and actions) was the true God, and all else merely idols. To recognize this God in Jesus is to become a disciple and a participant in the Jesus-action.

While these considerations do not sufficiently answer the whole range of christological questions, such as the status of other religions (including Judaism), the role of natural theology and the philosophy of religion, etc., it does present a critical framework for a theology of discipleship. To be a Christian means obedience to the command to make disciples of all men (and women); and in this respect, critical scholarship is valuable for the new knowledge it brings us about the Bible and Christian traditions. It is only through a renewed appreciation of Jesus and his message, expressed at a grassroots level of the church in radical lifestyles, that the church

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will live on as an authentic unfolding of the New Testament ecclesia. It is only through the power of example that Christians will have anything to offer the world in the way of an alternative to modern consumer lifestyle.

In this regard, it must be emphasized, that the age of imperialistic missionizing has come to an end (or at least it ought to), for Christ is the liberator, while paternalism is subtle enslavement. As a friend, Máire Dorgan, has said, even the word 'mission' connotes doing something for or to people, rather than with them. To do things with people is first of all to be an example of an alternative lifestyle option, which people can choose freely to follow or not, depending on their willingness to pay the price. But Christians must be willing to pay it first, which is the only legitimate way in which the church as a charismatic movement can gain adherents.

Perhaps the missionary preaching of the early church can give us a clue to a modern expression of evangelism (another loaded word) in Peter's sermon to the men of Judea (Acts 2:14-42). The structure of this sermon follows a fixed formula, which was apparently commonly arrived at by the early church, and has the following points: a) who we are (vv. 14-15); b) what we believe (vv. 16-36); and c) what we expect from you, the non-Christians (vv. 37-40). In this case, the context of the sermon was a living example of an alternative lifestyle, which the observers mistakenly

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took to be drunkenness. The apostle clarified the situation and layed before the hearers a decision: "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." (v. 40) What begins with preaching in the context of example then results in the decision of many persons for a new life-style: "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." (v. 42) This same progression can be seen in the Pentecost narrative, which begins with the very high level of the presence of the Spirit, and ends with the very mundane level of shared wealth: "And all who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need." (Acts 2:44-45)

Central to this notion of disciple-witnesses is the concept of 'power', which frees one to do these works of love. It is also the power to resonate in the auditors, that something is being communicated, which is authentic and an expression of self. It is conviction which creates conviction and motivates to action. As the writer of Luke-Acts writes: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Thus, what appears to the eyes of the world as ridiculous weakness and vulnerability is really 'power' to those who believe. If, as Baldwin says, the use of the concept of God is to make us freer,

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larger, and more loving, then not to believe in this God in effect means one becomes unfree, truncated, and spiteful. It is, though, more than an intellectual proposition.

It is a new freedom from oneself and for others, which excludes all claims of self-justification, and therefore, all fanaticism about one's own course of action. It must be a concern for truth which accepts appreciatively the pluralistic situation in which the church finds itself today. Therefore, social action is not set forth as an exclusive alternative to other forms of witness, but as one legitimate way in which Christians can express their faith by meeting needs of community through methods of community work.

Nor should it be thought, that commitment to certain political options is a precondition for faith--a position which is tantamount to a new form of phariseeism. While the issues raised by community work do lead to a consideration of wider political alternatives (such as socialism in the democratic sense), one need not take a stand here to be a Christian. I maintain at this point only the position, that just as the gospel has a critical function toward all human actions, community development and socialist thought have authentically critical things to say about a naive goodwill.

This conception of pluralism in the witness of the church has, to speak personally, caused a revolution in my own thinking about ecumenism and the way to go about it in our time. It is still a

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prevalent conception, that ecumenical action should necessarily lead to a common front, even to the extent of uniting existing denominations into larger structures. In the thinking of certain people in the 'official' ecumenical movement (e. g., Eugene Carson Blake, former executive secretary of the WCC and initiator of the Consultation on Church Union) the leaders of the churches should aim, at a minimum, at the goal of common recognition of ministries and sacraments through the aegis of a Christian ecumenical council. Fair enough! Nevertheless, 'official' churches--denominations, orders, etc. --, for all of their resources, expertise, 'right' theologies, and so on, rarely know what to do with the Jesus-action. They await a radical word from the Lord, then moderate it.

I have learned through contact with the Catholic Worker movement in America and the Ashram communities in England, that this is not the way to incarnate the Jesus-action, but to show initiative in concrete areas of need. This will probably mean a more or less uncoordinated--even anarchic--multiplication of tasks and the division of labor between the denominations and the radical Christian groups (which John Vincent, leader of the Ashram movement, calls 'para-churches' or 'half-churches'); and that one should not even expect the denominations to become anything but the Establishment. To say that the established churches should become 'God's avant garde'--as was said in the secular sixties--ignores the politics of the Jesus-action,

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and therefore, beats a dead horse.

Far from saying that the denominations are no good, this recognition frees one from false expectations about established structures, and from putting upon them a burden which they cannot bear. This makes it possible for grassroots Christians to set up prophetic groups with symbolic goals of reconciliation, liberation, love, justice, etc., rather than putting all one's eggs in the basket of 'church renewal'. These para-church groups will speak prophetically, both to the world and the established churches, and not worry excessively about the 'goal-displacement' and 'system-maintenance' (Etzioni) of the institutional churches. It also allows professional ministers to accept the limitations of traditional church patterns, while not defining one's total ministry in its terms. One becomes free to set up new embodiments of the Jesus-Thing (John Vincent) for people, who have no interest in those traditional forms, institutional religion, etc.; and would not otherwise have a handle on the gospel. Pluralism in the church means that one can do both the 'traditional' and the 'experimental' without being two-faced about it, or demanding that one style of church life conform to the other style. The process of ecumenism is, thus, to increase the plurality of styles and options, rather than eliminate them through institutional mergers. It is not management techniques per se nor rationalization of church structures by its methods which will create new life in the universal church, but

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by people getting hold, by any means necessary, of the Jesus-action. This simply reaffirms the truth behind the cliche, that the Spirit blows where it will.

AN EXAMPLE OF PLURALISM IN THE CHURCH: THE ASHRAM MOVEMENT AND THE SHEFFIELD INNER-CITY ECUMENICAL MISSION (S.I.C.E.M.)

The use of phrases like 'Jesus-action' or 'Jesus-thing' is obviously not the language of theological scholarship (which often prefers Greek and German words to understandable ones); but a way for lay people and non-Christians to get common sense handles on the gospel, and to accept a pluralism of christologies without claiming an unverifiable and dogmatic truth for any one position. The pluralistic situation in society and the church today demands and entails a tolerant and tentative approach to the truth. At a minimum, this means a provisional pluralism or relativism in theology. To show concretely how this pluralism can be embodied, I will now introduce the Sheffield Inner-City Ecumenical Mission (S.I.C.E.M., pronounced 'sick 'em') with which I have been associated through the Urban Theology Unit, and the Ashram House in Sheffield, where I lived during 1973-74.

Perhaps the best way to proceed is to set S.I.C.E.M. against the background of the established church, which to a certain extent is

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both a supporter and antagonist of the project. It was through the Methodist Church that Rev. Dr. John Vincent was called to take over the ministry of several inner-city churches, which according to the church authorities were dying on the vine and in need of pruning. Thus, without the established church there would have been no base for this ecumenical experiment.

On the other hand, those involved in the experiment consciously rejected the norms by which the established church judged success in the church and its ministry. Whether a local congregation could support a full-time minister (or even part-time), a church building, benevolences, etc., were not the prime considerations as to whether the congregation should continue or not, but rather the prime issue was the quality of its community. The answer of the church hierarchy was to close them down and combine congregations, which in the inner-city setting means the disappearance of the church altogether from working class districts. The subtle insinuation of middle class, suburban norms onto inner-city congregations has in effect stroyed many communities with proven strength and the will to carry on.

The theological retort to this form of middle class imperialism of the suburban church was a reversal of the received logic as to the standards by which a church will be judged successful. As Ed Kessler of U. T. U. has said:

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> Weak churches must be shut down. Their buildings must be given over to the communities in which they are found. SPIRITUAL WEAKNESS IS DECISIVE. The weakest links in the chain of Christian communities are the suburban churches. The real weakness is not found in the poor areas of city and country where the few older people struggle to keep a dying church alive. Weakness is found in the affluent churches where larger numbers of people demand spiritual comfort piled upon material comfort. Such places give the Gospel of Jesus a bad name.[6]

Needless to say, the church hierarchy found such remarks offensive and a challenge to the monoculture Christianity of suburbia. Nevertheless, it did point up something which needs to be said over and over again to suburbia, which is still very complacent in its wealth and power, and still insists on applying its theology and Christian style to all situations. Like many rural circuits, the so-called 'norm' of a full-time clergyman, plant, big budget and program is in deep trouble in the inner-city, and very few of these churches can expect to survive under those kind of expectations. Thus, these churches must work out styles of Christian presence which are authentic to them and within their resources. Expecting small churches to combine into larger ones in order to support the 'norm' often destroys a valid ministry in an area as well as a going Christian community with long traditions. Merging congregations often only removes a small inner-city community out to suburbia.

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[6]Ed Kessler (et al.), "9.5 Theses on Suburban Christianity" (Sheffield: Urban Theology Unit, 1974).

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This is not to say that the inner-city does not demand a change in the style of Christian presence; only that this must be effected by groups incarnated in the situation, and not imposed from without by persons with no understanding of the situation or awareness of alternative courses of action. While the 'norm' will probably continue in the suburbs for a long time to come, it hardly seems likely under the impact of secularization, specialization, and rapid social upheaval, that it will continue to define the 'one alternative' of ministry in our time. Many ministers are now pursuing 'tent-making' ministries, which are non-stipendiary (secular jobs with independent income). Grassroots, radical Christian groups, which are leading the way in many un-traditional areas of ministry, are demanding recognition of their work as legitimate expressions of the gospel. The established churches must learn to recognize this authenticity in their work as the work of the Spirit, for which we should be thankful rather than antipathetic or indifferent.

If this is an accurate forecast of a future trend, then it may well be that the wave of the future will be small, informal groups of Christians--mainly lay persons--gathering together to do the Jesus-action and celebrate the sacraments in their particular situation with their particular hope. While no one can predict the future relevance of a professionally-trained and paid clergy, the erosion of traditional Christian self-understandings and life-styles will make study all the

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more imperative for these groups, if they are to articulate their vision theologically. Perhaps the role of the professional theologian-minister will resemble the Jewish rabbi (teacher), the frontier circuit-rider, or the early Methodist ministers who were basically community organizers. Perhaps Christianity in its new expressions will be like Islam with no priestly class at all. These speculations will have to be tried, accepted, or rejected in the situation and without professional bias. It will also entail in depth study of the tradition, in order to know the successes and failures of past alternatives: sects, orders, etc. In America, the aversion to history which undermines our sense of context and continuity makes it difficult to envision alternatives; and when we actually attempt them, their failure is almost assured. This is both an observation and a plea to those groups, that any grassroots manifestation of the Spirit must be critically checked against the Bible and its understanding of Christ. To this extent, the Bible is absolutely central to the renewal of the church: and renewal will depend largely on the ability of someone within the community to interpret it in the full context of Christian history (including the Old Testament).

Ultimately, the church lives by hope in the promise, and only secondarily by its own planning efforts. This is another lesson which the established churches need to hear from the para-church, for ministry is a status conferred by the Holy Spirit (thus, the

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priesthood of all believers) rather than a professional role with a static image and function in society. When the members of the Ashram community moved into their house in Pitsmoor, a slum area of Sheffield, they had only vague ideas of serving the community, but few concrete plans. As the house gradually established trust with the local inhabitants and to see what skills and help they could offer, did they find a function for themselves. No one could have defined their roles in advance--e.g., social worker, theologian, psychologist, and so on--, and then given them tasks to perform (if only because each member has outside work, responsibilities, etc.). The willing identification with the area could never be encompassed in a role, as the community learned at a meeting with social workers. It was suggested to a group of case workers, that they should all live in the areas where their work was located; which met with vehement and defensive reaction and refusal. Professionalism provides an image to hide behind, for ministers as well as other professionals; and thus, identification with the image becomes more important than identification with those whom one is meant to serve. In areas of working class population, such as Pitsmoor, the image of the minister is either negative (he is in it for money, easy life, etc.), or else the people have no conception at all of what a minister is or does. Ministry to large areas of need in Pitsmoor had to start from scratch for the Ashram house, even though the Methodist church

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across the street was a going concern (for the time being). Thus, they set up a legal advice center, instigated the Nottingham Neighborhood Council to have a section declared a General Improvement Area, and started the Pitsmoor Action Group to do battle with the city planners for the area.

The internal Christian motivation is not lost in all of this activity, for the activity provides the context in which the Tuesday evening eucharist is done. The eucharist is the way in which we express liturgically--i.e., dramatically--our concerns, fears, and hopes in the history with which we have to do. It is the context of suffering and senselessness--as well as our own backgrounds of bourgeois affluence and privilege--for which we seek meaning and hope. Without such a symbolic presentation of our concerns in the context of action, liturgy becomes strictly formal and repetitive, and action would lose its motivation. It is what Horst Symanowski calls the tension between the inner and outer goals of the church.

From my experience with the Ashram community and the Catholic Workers' Hospitality Kitchen and Hospitality House, I have concluded that neither the blind activism of the '60's nor the introverted religiosity of the '70's can sustain the church. The church will carry on as church to the extent that it realizes the need for both things, each serving as the context for the other. Worship will celebrate action in light of the eschatological future; and action will

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be done in the light of the promise, that the principalities and power--the devil, that is--have been beaten, and are just throwing up a smoke screen as a delaying tactic. More concretely put, liturgy is the way in which Christians can approach authenticity and become free of the oppressive consumer and warfare society in which we all live.

ESCHATOLOGY AND THE CHURCH

The Biblical ideas of 'creation' and 'eschatological end' are not 'pre-scientific' explanation of the world, but attempts to formulate the negative in history: creation and its orders are fallen. They are ideas, which attempt to organize experience in a significantly different way than do the fertility cults, which see in the finite order the ultimate good (hence, idolatry); or the dualistic cosmologies, which see in the created order ultimate evil (hence, escape). Both views rob humanity of subjective freedom to act in history. The gospel claims to know a third alternative, which needs to be examined more closely.

While not denying the reality of the world, the Bible relativizes its reality, in that it is understood as creation rather than Creator. Only a person who knows the Creator can see creation as relative, for the powers and principalities hold us in thrall through the value we attach to the finite. To know the Creator is to be free from enslavement to the world; or, as Athanasius put it, the power

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of God is precisely his ability to show the finite powers for what they are: non-being, idols; hence, powerless over us through Christ our Lord. Amen!

This is the critical function of the gospel.[7] It is no plan guaranteed against failure, but an understanding of failure itself. The world will always be world, and we cannot count on it for the 'success' of our projects.

While the idea of creation refers us to the origins of things, especially the reality of evil, eschatology refers us to the goal of all things. Sub specie aeternitatis means a vision of things as 'passing away' (I Cor. 7:31); hence, Paul can say it is given to Christians to judge all things. Only they can look upon their past as slavery to the old age, while the old age sees no hope. Hope for the Christian is the awareness that the hopelessness of the present time is merely the last throes of the fallen powers (for Marxists, a pre-revolutionary situation, if that comparison helps). In any case, the legitimacy of these powers has been defeated, and they live on borrowed time. As Trutz Rendtorff has written the eschatological perspective...

> ...makes sensible in its way, that there can be no meaningful concept of the present world, which exhausts itself in an affirmation of the present. But it becomes aware of a state of affairs

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[7]Cf. W. Simpfendoerfer, Offene Kirche-Kritische Kirche (Stuttgart: Kreuz, 1969).

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> which in no way has first to be constituted in this world, but on the contrary, is effective in itself. Eschatology, so conceived, is a structure (Gestalt) of the emancipative character of modern society. By itself, it remains therefore empty of content. Only where it is related to the dialectic, which is inherent to this society and the world of Christianity does its meaning also become recognizable.[8]

In the conflict between light and dark, God takes the side of the powerless, who alone are able to avail themselves of the power of God. The ultimate power of the universe in his freedom stands for the liberation of all creation: thus, creation is taken up into salvation, and man becomes co-creator with God (synergism). This activist anthropology is hardly the individualistic and passive concept of salvation, which has come down to us through Western theology. To be saved from sin, death, and corruption--the classical concepts for the fallen order--means freedom to fight the fallen powers. It is, in Tillich's words, the power of Being to resist non-being. In the conceptuality of process philsophy, it is the response of the 'actual entity' to its 'initial aim' which God presents to it at its inception. Whatever philosophy we may select in order to universalize our experience, the critical issue for us is the kind of action which issues from it. That of course is a principle of Marx (set forth in the 11th thesis on Feuerbach): Not what you say, but what you do, is the

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[8]Trutz Rendtorff, Theorie des Christentums (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1972), p. 159. (translation mine)

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important aspect. That is the level at which we are challenged as Christians by other forms of humanism, which presuppose responsible self-criticism and praxis.

That challenge remains for me the most significant, in spite of the more or less pat answers by which Marxism is dismissed in America. Perhaps I would describe my attitude here as tentative; at least, as open and serious as I find certain Marxians to be (e.g., Leszek Kolakowski, Michael Harrington, Lucien Goldmann). In any case, the critique of society and their hope for the future upon which their actions are based is the level at which Christian-Marxist dialogue must take place. Lucien Goldmann has made this quite clear in his analysis of hope in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant:

> So long as the individual, the I, is the subject of action, the search for happiness is not universal but egoistic, and as such, contrary to virtue. The universal remains for him a duty which he can fulfill only in renouncing all content, his sensuous nature, his inclinations, that is to say, in renouncing his happiness. The union of these two heterogeneous elements of the highest good thus presupposes a radical change in the community, a qualitatively superior society, of the highest good, of the kingdom of God.[9]

If Kant is the fork in the road for modern philosophy, as Goldmann maintains, then Western thought either attempts to overcome Kant's individualistic dilemma through the Superman (Nietzsche)

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[9]Lucien Goldmann, Immanuel Kant (London: NLB, 1971), p. 198.

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or to transcend the individual with the collective (Marx; to some extent, Whitehead). Kant comes to the outer limits of individualist philosophy, for he has reached the outer limits of bourgeois society upon which it is based. His vision of a universal community of perpetual peace based on the categorical imperative is a utopian alternative to the trading state in which human relations are simply a means to an end. And yet he did not draw the conclusions implied by his own practical philosophy:

> Kant hoped for a historical development towards a better community, towards a society of citizens of the world, towards perpetual peace, and that hope is clearly expressed in his works. But it never became strong enough to render superfluous the practical postulate of a superhuman being who would bring about the eternal realization of this higher community: the kingdom of God.[10]

Thus, Kant saw no hope for the realization of this utopian alternative in history, but only in eternity. Goldmann explained this in terms of the economic and political backwardness of Germany (especially Prussia), as well as the weakness of the progressive forces in his country at that time. Nevertheless, the experience of the twentieth century has not inclined us to hope for the historical realization of Kant's ideals. Yet the unfinished problem of Kant's philosophy is shared by Christianity, and is the starting point for our dialogue with humanism and other religions:

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[10] Ibid., pp. 198-199.

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> Kant's philosophy was much more a beginning than an end, and thus only thinkers who have understood and perceived it as such have been able to appreciate its true philosophical importance. This has been achieved by starting from the most important question left by Kant's philosophy to its successors: Is the tragedy of human existence really insurmountable? Is there no way for empirical man to achieve the unconditioned, the highest good?[11]

One cannot presume to give any easy answers to that question, because it asks after more than clever words. It is a question of praxis, which aims at the liberation of men and women in the realization of a true community. It is most immediately a question of an alternative lifestyle, which presents an example.

If the reality of God is to become a real hope in our time, then our lifestyles must show that we are "fools for Christ"; i.e., that we are paying a price. Paul was such a witness, because he gave up his status as rabbi and its claim to authority, in order to put himself on the line. He could say he was justified by faith because he was not justified by any other external test in the type of behavior he carried on: controversy, beatings, arrest, and execution. The real sign of transcendence exists in the lives of those who pursue it; and in that sense, the Kingdom of God is already here as a practical option. It remains to be lived.

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[11] Ibid., pp. 225-226.

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CONCLUSION

The materialism of our age which is expressed in consumerism is wider than the issues of alternative social systems. Any concern to preach the gospel to secular society must examine this consumer self-understanding wherever it occurs, and then undermine it. In the 'overdeveloped' world, which includes the second world as well as the first, the same trend to maximize the material living standard without regard for others, the environment, etc., obtains, and provides little in the way of an alternative lifestyle. While I have no interest in preserving the market system, I have come to see that the system is ultimately rooted in this materialistic culture, which is just as much a part of present socialist planning as it is a part of capitalism. In Marxist terms, the critique of the system may include the means of production themselves, and not just the relations of production; for Marx himself shared with the bourgeoisie the faith in material progress, which has come under criticism from the ecology movement in our time. At some point in time, the end of growth economies is assured.

If the end has come for materialism and the understanding of human potential in its terms, then Christians must take responsibility for a different style of life which is non-materialistic in its fullest understanding: i.e., voluntary poverty.

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Yet all of us are caught to some extent in a system, which holds us in bondage. One feels sickened by the fact of three square meals a day, when others starve; that one drives, and thus uses up valuable non-renewable resources and pollutes; that one has legal rights and educational privileges because one has grown up in a privileged milieu; etc. The sickness of the situation is not reduced by our feeble rationalizations, which ignore these realities. They always come back upon us.

On the other hand, self-flagellation does no good either. It may increase concern with the problem, but it too creates demobilizing despair. Guilt does not create joy, but a heavy heart; while bourgeois 'joy' is sickening, because there is no feeling in it, no response to the suffering of others.

At this point, I must simply become confessional. This "old age" is not the real world, for its power is broken. From henceforth, Christians can live in the hope of the "new age" which is coming; and thus, they can realistically look at the sufferings of the world for which they too are responsible. This is the liturgical vision of the church in which Christians can feel real joy, because they sharein the liturgy, right now, their concrete hopes for the new world.

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